THE BEARING And BVRDEN OF the SPIRIT.

Wherein the ſickneſſe and ſoundneſſe of mans ſpirit is opened for the ſetling and comforting of afflicted and wounded conſciences.

In two SERMONS on *Prov.* 18. 14. Preached at *Cheſwick*,

By

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TO THE *WORSHIPFVLL* Captaine SAMVEL CARLETON, and his vertuous Wife Mrs. MARTHA CARLETON, Grace and Peace from Jesus Christ.

Beloved Friends,

IT is well knowne unto you, at whose requeſt theſe Sermons (now preſented joyntly to you both) came to bee preached, and for whoſe ſake they are thus

printed; if any good come to any by either, next unto God, the thankes is due unto you; I cannot denie to doe that ſervice which commeth within the compaſſe of my calling and power, which may either profit your ſelves, or ſatisfie any of your Noble friends, my onely ſorrow is, that I have ſo long delayed my promiſe, and your expectations; you now ſee, long look for commeth at length, and my earneſt deſire is that it may anſwer the expectation of the Noble Lady, and my thankfull mind, whoſe requitals

quitals to you and yours for many undeſerved favours, lay in no other way then the furthering of your ſpirituall good, and comfort. God (you ſee) gaineth glory to himſelfe by weake meanes, and many times derided Sermons by braine-ſick, and full men, doe proove reliſhing and healing to wounded conſciences: I wiſh from my heart unto you both, and all yours the peace and purity of conſcience, the integrity and ſincerity of holy walking; together with the addition of all graces and comforts be-

longing unto Chriſtians, and that a ſpurre may be found in theſe Sermons, to prick you on to a holy care of conſcience, which will proove your beſt friend, or worſt enemy; beleeve me (friends) the man is as his conſcience is; if that bee good in conſtitution, and in execution, all things will anſwer to it in life and death: you enjoying its goodneſſe, ſhall not faile of its ſtrength and boldneſſe; make much of it, and cheriſh it therefore as your beſt Iewell, and in ſo doing, I ſhall account my paines plentifully recompenced,

penced, and be further encouraged to bee yours in what I am able when you ſhall bee pleaſed to command me; in meane time I take leave, and reſt

Yours in the Lord Ieſus,

IOHN SEDGVVICK.

Soper-lane London,
Auguſt 21. 1638.

To the Reader.

I Wish thee conſcience and care in reading and following what is contained in the enſuing Sermons; which are now more large in the Preſſe then they were in the Pulpit, and may receive a farther addition of certaine caſes if leaſure ſhall permit, in meane time let this that is done profit thee, and helpe him with thy prayers who is thine in the beſt bond and ready to doe thee good,

Jo: Sedgvvick.

THE BEARING of the burden by the SPIRIT.

PROV. 18. 14.

The ſpirit of a man will ſuſtaine his infirmity, but a wounded ſpirit who can beare?

SAlomon in his Proverbs is the great Maſter of the Sentences, all his Parables are maſter Sentences, whoſe matter exceed their words, and whoſe words excell not themſelves:

ſelves; each ſentence is pithy, and compleate, and ſo abſolute, that moſt an end (eſpecially from the beginning of the tenth Chapter) it ſhineth in its owne native brightneſſe, and therefore (at this time) it ſpares us the ſearching after any coherence.

This preſent Proverb preſents us with two obſervables;

1. The power of a ſound ſpirit againſt all externall calamity, uttered in theſe words, *The ſpirit of a man will ſuſtaine his infirmitie.*
2. The impotencie of a mans ſpirit againſt inward perplexities, *a wounded ſpirit who can beare?*

Concerning the firſt part, I ſhall enquire into theſe things:

Firſt,

First, what is meant by the infirmity of man?

Secondly, what is that ſpirit of a man which doth and will beare this infirmity of a man?

To the knowledge of the firſt enquiry, know that the infirmity of man is double.

1. One ſinfull. What are all thoſe ſlips, frailties, imperfections, unwilling riſings, and actions befalling the godly in their progreſſe of Sanctification? are they not infirmities? and it cannot be denied but that in reference to ſuch kinde of infirmities, the ſpirit of a Chriſtian is, and will be ſuſtaining; So long as a man alloweth not himſelfe in evill, or evill in him- *Note.*

himselfe; but can and doth thoroughly judge himselfe unto the bewailing, and loathing, and leaving of all knowne evill; in this case conscience will be his comfort, and his stay, upholding him in the assurance of a good estate with God against all those troubling arguments, and distressing feares wherewithall hee is daily followed.

2. Another is sorrowfull: humane calamity is humane infirmity; take all those miseries and crosses which divine providence doth inflict either immediately, or mediately upon men, suppose them to lie in the

the goods, names, bodies, children, or friends of men. And this is the infirmity of man ſpoken of in this Text; its no new thing for the Holy Ghoſt to call croſſes and afflictions befalling men, by the name of infirmity or weakneſſe, and that becauſe of that naturall imbecillity which is found in man to free himſelfe from them, or to ſtand under them; a ſtate of calamity is a weakning eſtate; and none are more weake then men under the croſſe and rod, theſe things doe make men feeble and infirme; as ſickneſſe is the weakeneſſe of the body, ſo croſſes

croſſes, reproaches, and afflictions are the weakeneſſe of man.

Concerning our ſecond enquirie, you muſt note that there is a double Spirit ſuſtaining humane infirmity.

A two-fold Spirit.

1. One above man, and yet given unto man, and that is the Spirit of God, who is a Spirit of power, and doth helpe to beare up the burden of all our calamities; *likewiſe the Spirit alſo helpeth our infirmities*, ſaith *Paul, Rom.* 8.26. when a Chriſtian doth finde a weakneſſe in himſelfe, both to doe and to ſuffer; the Spirit of God is aſſiſtant unto him, and doth make the burden eaſie and ſupportable; and what we are never

never able to beare of our ſelves, by his ſtrength we can and ſhall beare it, as the Apoſtle ſheweth, ſaying, *I can do all things through him that ſtrengtheth me, Phil.* 4. 13.

2. Another in man, which maketh man to be man; which in ſome places is taken largely for the whole ſoule of man; but in this place more narrowly and ſtrictly for the conſcience of man, its uſuall for the Hebrewes to expreſſe conſcience under the name of the ſpirit or the heart of man; and in the New Teſtament, it is called in one place our ſpirit, *Rom.* 8. 16. and in another

The ſpirit of man diverſly taken.

ther place the ſpirit of man; *for what man knoweth the things of a man, ſaving the ſpirit of a man which is in him,* 1 *Cor.*2. 11. and ſurely if we doe looke unto the originall, and being, and manner of working of conſcience in man, which is every way ſpirituall, it is moſt aptly named ſpirit, and this is the ſpirit which is ſo able to ſuſtaine a man under his infirmities.

Conſcience called a ſpirit and why.

Now this ſpirit of man commeth under a double conſideration.

Mans ſpirit conſidered two wayes:

1. In its Creation

1. Of Originall Creation, as it was mans before the fall, in full vigour and rectitude, and ſo it was ſpecially uſefull and ſerviceable unto *Adam*, that

that had hee beene put unto it, the Omnipotencie thereof would have borne the greateſt of burdens; a ſparke whereof is to bee found, and may bee ſeene in many meere naturall men; whoſe ſpirits retaine ſuch ſtrength in them, that they have endured many croſſes, and manfully received the charge of many and great calamities, thinking the chiefeſt point of vertue conſiſted in bearing croſſes and devouring injuries; they have I ſay gone farre in this worke of enduring outward calamities, although failing in the right manner and the right end of the ſame.

2. Of

1. In its regeneration.

2. Of ſpirituall qualification, the ſpirit of a man, as it is renewed by grace, is ſtrong to doe much, and to ſuffer much; it is of ſuch incredible might, that it doth and will ſupport in the midſt of all trouble. Grace is a creature enlivening the ſpirit, enlightening the ſpirit, and ſo aſſiſting the ſpirit of a man, that it over-maſters the feare and the feeling of afflictions, upholding a man in being, in liberty, in confidence, and in cheerefullneſſe under all, and any even the greateſt infirmities that may or can befall him; fleſh and bloud will tremble at that trouble which grace will

will trample upon; nature will ſhrinke at that paine as intollerable, which a ſound and ſanctified ſpirit makes nothing of in compariſon.

Yet miſtake me not, I doe not ſay that calamity ſhall not be felt by a ſound ſpirit, there is a burden in every croſſe, and a kinde of weakeneſſe in every ſpirit, *No chaſtening for the preſent ſeemeth to be joyous but grievous*, *Heb.*12.11. But the thing I aime at is this, *Note.*

That when conſcience within man is truly good, it is mighty to beare up a man from ſinking and fainting under the preſent croſſe: Suppoſe the croſſe to come in its full weight, and to be heavily laid on a man by the hand of God, yet there ſhall be *Doct.*

be such a supportance from a good conscience unto man, that the burthen shall scarse be burthensome, it shall never become over-burthensome, a man by it shall be kept from being slavishly dejected, or overwhelmedly fearefull, the spirit shall not faile before the crosse; No calamity shall overdaunt or overcome such an one: the Text saith, it *will sustaine the infirmity:* the holy Spirit doth not speake of it as a thing possible or probable onely, but reall and actuall, as having a certainty in it; and the truth of this you may observe two waies.

1. In the sentence of Scripture.

2. In the soundnesse of argument.

For the Scripture, in one place it saith; *Nay in all these things*

things we are more then conquerors, *Rom.*8.37. Behold a ſtrange truth of ſpeech; *They were killed all the day long* for the ſake of Chriſt, *and accounted as ſheepe for the ſlaughter*, there was humane infirmity in extremity, and yet they were conquerors, more then conquerors, and that not in a few of theſe, but in all theſe things; here is the exceeding ſuſtaining of the ſpirit. In another place its written, *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed, we are perplexed, but not in deſpaire; perſecuted, but not forſaken; caſt downe, but not deſtroied*, 2 *Cor.*4.8,9. infirmitie was great upon theſe men, and yet not over matching, none of all theſe miſeries could bring their ſpirits under miſery; but as the maine Ocean ſwallowes up the overflowings of all other rivers,

rivers, and as the well rig'd ſhip beares its owne burthen ſtoutly in the midſt of a moſt tempeſtuous ſea; ſo their ſanctified ſpirits did receive all, and ſuſtaine all theſe calamities, being in nothing terrified, much leſſe by any thing overcome: *David*, *Iob*, *Paul*, and the holy Martyrs are readie to witneſſe unto this truth, but wee will ſpare them for this time.

Reaſon. Shewing unto you in the next place, that it cannot bee but that a ſpirit in ſoundneſſe doth and will ſupport under humane calamity; for

1. 1. A ſpirit in goodneſſe is a ſpirit of ſtrength, and power; it is of incredible, invincible might; *when I am weake then am I ſtrong*, ſaith *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* 12. 10. the ſtrength of a gratious ſpirit is the ſtrength of God made perfect

perfect in weakeneſſe *verſe* 9. it is no weakeneſſe that is able to overmaſter it; power is too hard for weakeneſſe, as light is overmatching to darkneſſe; all humane calamity to a ſound ſpirit is but infirmity, it therefore beares it; were it ſtrength and might, then the caſe might be doubtfull, as in all caſes where power and power meet, but here is power againſt weakneſſe, and therefore no marvaile if it beare up and overcome.

2. A ſpirit in goodneſſe, is a ſpirit in comfort and cheerefullneſſe, it is fortified with the ſenſe of Gods favour, and made comfortable with divine conſolations; yea and it is ſuch a lightſome temper that it takes pleaſure in infirmities; *rejoyceth in tribulation, yea and accounts it*

2. 2 Cor. 12. 10. Rom. 5. 3.

James 1.2 *all joy when it falls into divers temptations*; Now the joy of the Lord is the ſtrength of the ſoule, *Neh.*8.10. and who ſo are filled with it, can live in death, ſing in priſon, and with much courage, and conſtancy beare up; and endure any calamity.

3. 3. Such a ſpirit is a patient ſpirit; and patience is a bearing up grace; it willingly ſtoopes downe to the croſſe, and as readily takes up the croſſe, it doth beare quietly, and with admirable ſubmiſſion, all the ſtroakes of Gods hand; and thinketh no miſery greater then is deſerved, or more then can be borne; and hereupon it is the ſtrength of a man in the evill day; a man without patience is no more able to beare any the leaſt croſſe, then a man can beare

beare a burden without a paire of ſhoulders; but when patience poſſeſſeth the ſoule and ſpirit of a man, all burdens are overcommingly and cheerfully borne.

4. A ſound ſpirit is a contented ſpirit; and contentment giveth unto a man, three things for his upholdment under the preſent calamity. 4.

Three things in contentment upholding the ſpirit

1. Setledneſſe and ſtaiment of minde, it is the ſoules quietation under all trouble, making it ſtill and ſilent, freeing it from all thoſe murmurings, repinings, and diſturbances wherewithall naturally it is hurried up and downe like a ſhip in a ſtorme.

2. Delightfullneſſe and complacencie of ſoule, it doth not onely compoſe the mind unto any condition by an holy pliableneſſe,

bleneſſe, but it yeelds unto man an approovement of his condition, that a man ſhall ſee ſuch a goodneſſe in it unto himſelfe, that he ſhall be well pleaſed with it, no way quarrelling at it, or diſliking of it; contentment maketh the preſent condition to bee Gods condition; and knoweth that Gods condition is the beſt condition, *Pſal.16.6.*

3. Satisfyingneſſe of minde. In all contentment there is ſufficiency; there is a bleſſedneſſe even in miſery, and there ſhall be no want in all wants, the reachings and cravings of the ſoule ſhall bee fully anſwered. Now hereupon, becauſe by holy contentment the ſoule is enabled to take up the impreſſion of the preſent condition, as humid qualities doe receive the

the figure of their continent, and becauſe the mind and ſoule falls in with an afflicted condition as the diſpenſation and allotment of a Soveraigne and wiſe God: hence it is I ſay, that the ſpirit is ſo ſuſtaining under trialls and troubles.

5. A ſound ſpirit is a beleeving ſpirit, filled and qualified with faith, which muſt needs bee a ground of ſtrong ſupportance under all humane calamities, all things are poſſible to him that beleeveth, and a ſpirit of faith is couragious and conquering; doe but conſider a fourefold worke of faith enabling the ſound ſpirit to beare its calamity. 5.

Faith doth 4. things to the enabling of the ſpirit under the croſſe.

1. It apprehends divine aſſiſtances, and ſets up overmatching helps under all calamities, it is the dejection of the ſpirit

to be left to it ſelfe in times of trouble, and for a man to finde to his ſenſe a troubled condition to be his maſter, as we may ſee in *Eliſhaes* ſervant, who when he ſaw the great hoſte of the King of *Aſſyria*, ſent to take his maſter; crieth out, Alas maſter how ſhall we doe? his troubles were above all his arguments, and the man ſeemeth to be at his wits end; But behold the faith of *Eliſha*, and you ſhall ſee it to be above all his trouble; for he quiets his owne heart, and the heart of his man, with the beleeving apprehenſion of a greater power with him then againſt him: Saying, *feare not, for they that bee with us, are more then they that be with them*, 2 *King*. 6. 15, 16. it is the worke of faith to finde out, and to bring home a Chriſtians helps

helps unto him in times of triall; it makes God at such times both present in favour, and assistant in councell, and power, in confidence of this *David* will lie him downe, and sleep & wake, and not be afraid of ten thousands of people that have set themselves against him round about, yea he can walke thorow the valley of the shadow of death and feare none evill, *Psal.*23.4. Psal.3.5, 6.

2. It sets up God for a mans owne in love, and care in the midst of all afflictions; God separated and divided from a Christian in any misery is the weakenesse of the Spirit and makes the heart to sinke and faint within; Oh how downe & dead, how crackt, and undone was *David* when God to his sense was gone from him? at

ſuch times he was a man without a ſpirit, and now the evill was great, and ſore, and intollerable: But when by the eye of faith God was diſcovered to be his God, and hee could well perceive that it was not all his afflictions which could ſeparate him from the love of God unto him in Chriſt; Now he cheeres up himſelfe and faith to his ſoule, *Why art thou ſo dejected O my ſoule? truſt ſtill in God, who is the health of my countenance and my God, Pſal.43.5.*

3. It keepeth of from the ſoule and ſpirit whatſoever might weaken or deject it in and under calamities; in the day of a Chriſtians calamitie, it is with him as it is in the gathering of a bile or botch in the body, all the ill humours will make their recourſe unto the botch, increaſing

increasing disquietment unto the patient; just so, when we have miseries seazing upon us, suspition of Gods love towards us, feares of what men can doe against us, and tumultuousnesse of passions will haunt and follow us, in so much that wee finde we have our selves to bee greater troubles to our selves then all outward troubles that doe befall us; woe sticke our selves in greater deepes then troubles doe cast us into; Now faith relieveth the soule against these or the like things; partly in carrying a man from all the creatures unto God, shewing unto him that men are but men, whose breath is in their nostrills, and whose power is confined, and malice over-ruled by the power of an Almighty God, who being with us and for

Note.

Foure waies how faith releeveth the soule

us, wee need in nothing to feare who can harme us? partly in keeping a man from looking too much downeward and overwhelming our ſelves in and by the aggravation of our trouble:

Simile. if men looke too much upon the water in tempeſtuous times, their heads will ſoone ſwimme, and their ſtomack qualme, and whilſt ſenſe and reaſon is poaring into an afflicted condition, and a man is willing and wittie in aggravating his miſeries unto the higheſt, making the moſt and the worſt of them, the ſpirit will ſoone bee ſicke, and ſink, and faint within; now faith ſets a man above all his miſerable conditions, ſhewing to a man that hee lieth not at the mercie of any his moſt miſerable conditions; that as it is not a good condition which

can

can make him, ſo it is not any bad condition that can marre him, partly by ſetting a Chriſtian upon the way of mitigation, learning the Chriſtian the art and skill of breaking the wave in the midſt of his moſt violent toſſings. Now it ſtarts up the hand of God in all this, and the wiſedome and goodneſſe of God in ordering all unto good, which was *Davids* ſtay in the great calamity, and made him to ſay, *let him alone, and let him curſe, the Lord hath bidden him, and it may bee that the Lord will looke on mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite good for his curſing this day*, 2 *Sam.* 16. 11, 12. partly by countermanding the violent riſings and habituall vexations of the ſoule; faith is an enemy unto diſtempered paſſions, it checks

checks it, and crieth it downe and will not admit that a man ſhould be angry and froward, and fretfull under the hand of
Jonah 4.4 God; *Doſt thou well to be angry?* ſaith faith, *ſhall we receive good and not evill from the Lord? Iob* 2. 10.

4. It puts the pawnes and earneſts of God into the hands of a Chriſtian in evill times; a man in any condition without the promiſe is as weake as miſerable; but the promiſes of God going along with a man they will proove his greateſt ſtrength and comfort in any condition; we muſt know, that the Covenant was made for the comforting of Chriſtians in all conditions, and there are ſpeciall promiſes made to Chriſtians in times of their diſtreſſe, which onely faith can finde, and ſup-

ſupply the Chriſtian withall: by meanes whereof the head is held above water, and the man made ſtronger then all his trialls and croſſes; when faith reades that God wil know the ſoules of his in adverſity, *Nah.*1.7. That God will be with his in the fire and water, *Eſa.*43.2. That all miſerable evills ſhall end in ſpirituall good to them that love God, *Rom.*8. 28. And that, that God who hath ſhewed his great and ſore evills will quicken them againe, *Pſal.*71. 20.21.

Now the ſpirit gathers ſpirits unto it ſelfe, and is made lively, and ſtrong; yea it gets upon the rocke and triumphs over all trouble.

Having thus opened the point unto you, the Application muſt needs be this.

Firſt,

Vse 1. First, to discover unto us that evillnesse of spirit which is in the sonnes of men; I may justly complaine, that most men doe want soundnesse and sincerity of spirit to beare them up in evill times, considering two things.

Two evidences of weaknes of spirit. 1 Feare.

1. Some men doe overfeare troubles before they come, the very empty thought and conceit of troubles is terrible and perplexing unto them; when it was told the house of *David* saying, *Syria is confederate with Ephraim, his heart was mooved, and the heart of his people as the trees of the wood are mooved with the winde, Esay* 7.2. When *Belshazzar saw the comming forth of the fingers of a mans hand, and writing over against the Candlestick upon the plaister of the wall, his countenance was changed,*

changed, and his thoughts troubled him; so that the joynts of his loines were loosed, and his knees smote one against another, Dan.5. 5,6,7. and even so is it with too too many among us, the very newes and conceit of troubles or calamities which possibly may befall them, doth put them into such shaking fits, that they know not what to doe with themselves; and now tell mee where is the soundnesse and strength of your spirit? call you that a stout spirit that is daunted with the report and thought of calamity?

Ob. Good men have feared troubles?

Sol. Know, that there is a twofold fearing of troubles before they come. A twofold fearing of troubles,

The one is, a carefull and beleeving feare, 1. Of faith

opposed to

to carnall ſecurity, which was found in holy *Iob*, who ſaid, *the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me, Iob* 3.25. Surely the good man in his proſperity did not caſt of all thought of adverſity, but did wiſely conſider, that a change might come upon his eſtate and family, it might be that his ſun might bee darkned, and his day turned into night, and he looked upon his children, and wife, and friends, and ſtock, and honour, as things dying and fading, there being no conſtancy in outward mercies unto any.

The

The other is, a carking and distressing feare opposite unto faith and comfort; a fearing either without a cause, or beyond all bounds, thorough the utter mistake of a miserable condition unto the sons of men; wherein feares doe cut, and divide the heart, even emptying a man of all present joy, and future hope; this now is an argument that the spirit of infirmity doth possesse a man, and that hee wants that spirit which will sustaine a mans infirmity. 2. Of distrust.

2. Some men are overburdened by the crosses which do befall them, the least crosse that is doth sink them, and they cannot 2. Faintnesse.

not beare or endure any calamity, indeed before that troubles come, they wil brag & boast as if they would & could carry al the world before them, and no adversity could overmaster them or their spirits; but when they are put to it, and the day of triall commeth, alas they are men of very poore and impotent spirits, *Achitophel* like, who being under disacceptation most desperately hangs himselfe, as being no way able to beare it; O how do men roare, and complaine, and lie downe in the dust, suffering crosses to binde them hand and foot, and to spoile them of all their comforts? it is strange to observe the weakenesse of spirit in some men, who though they have many comforts for one crosse, yet that one crosse doth so dampe and daunt them,

them, that all joy and comfort is gone, and they are mightily overwhelmed; thus doe moſt men want ſupporting ſpirits: and ſurely their ſtrength is weake *who faint in the day of trouble, Pro.*24.10. and ſuch men may doe well to ſuſpect the ſoundneſſe of their ſpirits; certaine it is, that there is a want of ſoundneſſe of ſpirit where the ſupportance of ſpirit doth wholy faile: ceaſe to wonder that thou art ſo ſinking and fainting, and leave crying out againſt the greatneſſe of thy preſent trouble, knowing that there wants ſuch a ſpirit within as ſhould be, which is the cauſe of this thy failing.

Queſt. But may not a deare childe of God faint, and his ſpirit faile him in the day of his calamities?

Unto

Sol. Unto this I anſwer three things,

1. That it may ſo fall out, that a Chriſtian indeed may bee to ſeeke of the helpe and ſtrength of his ſpirit in and under croſſes befalling him; Suppoſe him
   1. To have forfeited the ſenſe of divine favour.
   2. To have formerly neglected or abuſed divine aſſiſtances.
   3. To be ſuddainely ſurprized by the ſtrangeneſſe and the ſtrength of the calamity comming upon him.
   4. To bee followed both with the continuation of ſome grieving

grieving affliction, or the multiplication and comming in of one croſſe upon the neck of another:

And ſurely in theſe and the like times, the ſpirit within him which alwaies retaineth ſtrength and might, may not be ſo ſerviceable and ſupporting unto him as at other times it hath beene, and in time to come it may be againe.

2. That though there may be much fainting overtaking the ſpirits of ſanctified men for a time, yet it is not totall faintneſſe; there is and may be a very weake uphold-ment; the ſpirit is many times

times well neare ſpent in the ſpirituall conflict, and labouring under ſome grievous wounds, and now it upholds in much weakneſſe; a horſe that is almoſt tired, carrieth his burden, but not in that pace and with that mettle as when hee was freſh; there are degrees of ſtrength; ſometimes wee are holpen with a little helpe, *Dan.* 11.34. and it is a day of ſmall things with us, and it is not much that the ſpirit within doth for us; at other times the ſpirit being freed is more full of aſſiſtance and carrieth us thorough all troubles; one mans ſpirit may ſuſtaine him under

The ſtrength of the ſpirit is graduall.

under his infirmity more then another; yea and the ſpirit of the ſame man may at one time and in one croſſe more beare him out then in another. Witneſſe *David*, who in the caſe of *Nabal* was very weake and paſſionate; he had ſcarce the ſpirit of a man in him. But now in the caſe of *Shimei* where the croſſe was farre greater, his ſpirit did with much ſtrength beare him out.

3. That there is a double ſinking of the ſpirit under afflictions, or miſerable evills.

(1. One ariſing from the weakneſſe of nature in the want of all

grace, and thus the godly faint not.

2. Another ariſing from the weakneſſe of grace by the oppoſition of temptation and corruption.

And thus the godly may faint in part, but they ſhall come to a recovery of themſelves againe; it is with the godly in their ſinkings under afflictions, as with a man that is skilfull to ſwimme; at the firſt when hee is caſt into the water he is over head and eares, and the whole body is covered, but by and by hee riſeth up againe and ſwimmes upon the water, commanding the water under him; whereas it is with a meere naturall and carnall man

man in his ſinkings under afflictions, as it is with a ſtone caſt into the deepe, there is a great noiſe made, but he ſinketh lower and lower and never riſeth up againe;

To examine the ſtrength and ſufficiency of our ſpirits to our enabling under the croſſes wee ſuffer; tell me not ſo much of the greatneſſe and grievouſneſſe of your croſſes, which you are quick enough to doe, but anſwer me, what is the ſpirit within you? and how doth it ſerve and helpe you? can it, and doth it ſuſtaine you? rightly bearing the burden for you? I yeeld, 1 That ſome mens ſpirits can & do ſleight croſſes, and ſeemingly they make nothing of them; but with the Leviathan they laugh at the ſha- *Vſe 2.*

king of the ſpeare; but this is an argument of an evill and naughty ſpirit not to be ſenſible of Gods hand and rod. 2 That men carnall and formall to outward ſeeming are marveilous hardie in temper, and ſtout in ſpirit, and have without flinching or fainting paſſed thorough many afflictions, and endured extreame torments, when alas they have brawned themſelves, or a ſpirit of ſlumbering and benummedneſſe is caſt upon them; and for ſome ſelfe aimes they have onely reſtrained paſſion, in the meane time they doe remaine deſtitute of all poſitive joy, peace, and confidence, and want the aſſurance of the goodneſſe of their ſpirits in bearing the croſſe befalling them.

Queſt. How may a man know that

that by a ſound and good ſpirit he beareth the croſſe and calamity which God layeth upon him?

Anſw. By theſe Signes.

Three ſignes of a ſound ſpirit upholding man under the croſſe.

1. When the cauſe of ſuffering is good; a good ſpirit cannot beare up in an ill cauſe; when a man ſuffers as a murderer, or as a thiefe, or as an evill doer, or as a buſie body in other mens matters, as it is written, 1 *Pet.* 4. 15. Now conſcience cannot uphold; but when a man ſuffers as a Chriſtian, and is reproached for the name of Chriſt, conſcience can and doth uphold, as you may reade in the 14. and 16. verſes of the ſame Chapter; we ſee the ſtoutneſſe of the Apoſtles enduring the laſh and the priſon, was grounded on this, that they *were counted worthy to ſuffer*

1. A good cauſe.

ſhame for his name, Acts 5. 41.

2. A good carriage.

2. When the carriage under the croſſe is becomming a good ſpirit, which carrieth a man under the croſſe,

Six waies of the ſpirits carrying a man under the croſſe.

1. With ſilence, ſtopping inward frettings, and outward murmurings againſt the Lord; making a man to ſay, yet my ſoule be ſilent unto the Lord, it layeth the mouth in the duſt, *and dares not open the mouth againſt the Lord to charge him fooliſhly, 1 Sam. 3. 28, 29. Pſal. 39. 9. 62. 5.*

2. With ſubmiſſion and ſubjection; the ſoule is low and very humble, poore, and exceeding empty; the man is caſt downe under Gods hand and will; ſaying, *it is the Lord, let him doe as it ſeemeth good unto him, 1 Sam. 3. 18. 2. Sam. 15. 25.*

3. With

3. With thankefullneſſe; the man can kiſſe the rod, and bleſſe the rod, and ſay with *Iob, the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord, Iob* 1.21,22.

4. With religion; making God as lovely and good, and worthy to be praiſed & prayed unto under calamity as at any other time of proſperity: a man under the power of a ſound ſpirit doth looſe much of his ſinne, nothing of his godlineſſe; I dare ſay he is more quick and hearty in his devotion then at other times; the ſoule doth now ſettle it ſelfe upon ſpirituall imployment, and is taken up with God, *Is any man afflicted, let him pray, Iames* 5. 13.

5. With humiliation; now a man ſhall finde the guilts of

his ſinne, and doth conſider the deſerts of his ſins, he can and doth weepe more for the ſinfullneſſe of ſinne, then for all the evills he doth ſuſtaine and endure; he well knoweth that man ſuffereth for his ſinne; and that ſinne deſerveth more evill, then God inflicts upon his children; and that the evill of ſinne being the greateſt of evills, can never be ſufficiently bewailed.

6. With hope, waiting upon Gods time and pleaſure for deliverance out of trouble, expecting that great good ſhall happily befall him, in and by all the troubles which he endureth; he conſiders that as the Bee hath his ſting, ſo hee hath his honey; and croſſes have their comforts in the latter end, as well as bitterneſſe in the beginning.

ginning. I say such men doe put themselves into the covenant and promise, and will keep themselves there; they doe see the Covenant going along with them in their trialls and troubles, and doe beleeve that a little assured good is above a great deale of sensible evill; and this is the moderation of their spirit in and under the rod. *Note.*

3. When their comming out of trouble is glorious and gratious; a sound spirit doth beare afflictions with power unto profit; and carrieth all painefull evills with soveraigne good unto it selfe; so that when a Christian is at the end of his trouble and tossings, he shall set downe with great cost and recompence; having the great fruit of his patience; even blessed is he that endureth, and the Spirit of 3. A good issue.

God and glory ſhall reſt upon him, he ſhall ſay with *David, before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now have I kept thy word, Pſal.*119.67. *And it is good for me that I have beene afflicted, that I might learne thy ſtatutes, verſe* 71. *Neverthelesſe afterward it yeeldeth the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſſe unto them which are exerciſed thereby, Heb.*12.11. if we can finde any good by afflictions, that our proud hearts are humbled, that our corruptions are weakned and waſted; that our graces are quickned and enlarged, and that we are in any degree made more holy and heavenly; this is an argument unto us, that we have borne all our afflictions by the ſtrength of a ſound ſpirit.

Vſe 3. Labour that there may bee found

found within you a good and a ſound ſpirit to beare you up under your troubles; we know not to what times of tryall God hath reſerved us; wee may meete with the croſſe, and calamity may be our portion, wee know not how ſoone, and then ſtrength to beare will doe well; but know, that there is nothing will better helpe in ſufferings, and keepe up the ſoule in patience and comfort, then the ſpirit which is ſpirituall, there is no ſpirit to the ſound ſpirit, and the ſpirit can never bee ſound untill that it be made ſpirituall; conſcience was made good at the firſt; and conſcience is fit for goodneſſe now, and goodneſſe will bee the good of it, and the good of man by it; learne to know two things.

The goodnesse of spirit stands in 7. things. 1. Holines.

First, that the goodnesse of conscience stands, 1. In its sanctity by spirituall renovation; when as it is free from the filth of corruption, and qualified with divine graces.

2. Quietnesse.

2. In its quietnesse and peace, it must be pacified as well as purified; it must not onely bee privatively quiet, but also positively quiet, there must not only be no torment, but a blessed security and assurance within it.

3. Vprightnesse.

3. In its sincerity, it must be upright, freed from the rottennesse of guile and hypocrisie, this is that truth in the inward parts which God so much delighteth in, *Psal.* 51. 6.

4 Strength

4. In its ability, when it is strong in execution, and able to exercise its owne operations, and freely disposed to spirituall im-

imployments; what good can conſcience doe us whilſt it is weake and unable to beare it ſelfe?

5. In itstenderneſſe, it muſt be feeling, melting, yeelding, and bleeding. 5. Tenderneſſe.

6. In its cleareneſſe, the good of conſcience is the light in conſcience, it muſt bee filled with ſaving light, and be informed by the rule, not onely naturall, but ſpirituall; it muſt in ſome meaſure in a ſpirituall manner ſee and know it ſelfe, its God, its duty, its way, its worke, its object. 6. Cleareneſſe.

7. In its freedome, it muſt have liberty, although it hath a a binding power, which it derives from the Word of God, yet it ſelfe muſt bee freed from entanglements by ſinne and error, and muſt be brought into bon- 7. Liberty

bondage by no creature.

Secondly, the way to attaine this goodneſſe of ſpirit is,

Two waies of attaining goodneſſe of ſpirit.

1. To bee ſenſibly convinced of the badneſſe and naughtineſſe of our ſpirits naturally; we have within us no ſparke of ſaving goodneſſe, but our hearts are full of guile and guilt, *and they are evill above all things, Ier.17.9.* wee fooliſhly fancie their naturall goodneſſe, and that keepeth us of from ſound endeavour after their ſpirituall goodneſſe; who among us would labour after that which hee conceiveth hee wants not; our worke is to get ſound acquaintance with the illneſſe and baſeneſſe of our owne ſpirits, and to bewaile the ſame before the Lord.

2. To ſet upon the uſe of thoſe meanes whereby badneſſe

neſſe may bee remooved, and true goodneſſe may be brought into your conſciences, which I conceive are theſe foure.

Meanes of making conſcience good to beare are foure.

1. The Spirit in Sanctification, who alone can and doth heale the infirmity of mans ſpirit, by the ſubduing of corruption within him, and vouchſafing courage and ſtrength unto the inner man by the creation of all ſaving graces within. 1. The Spirit.

2. The Lord Jeſus in application, there is that vertue in the bleedings and dyings of Chriſt, that it is able to kill and crucifie ſinne, and to ſprinkle from an evill conſcience; *and to purge the conſcience from dead works* 2. Chriſt.

works to ſerve the living God, Heb.9.14.& 10.22. there is enough in the Lord Jeſus to make us wholly holy, and truly good in Gods ſight; he being made unto us of God, Wiſedome, and Sanctification; and one every way fitted for the communication of holineſſe to his members.

1. The Word.

3. The Word in adminiſtration, the Law and the Goſpell meeting in the ſpirituall vertue thereof with the ſpirit of man; is a notable meanes to make it good and ſound; the Word of God by its comfortable promiſes, and cleare directions doth and will mightily enable the ſpirit

rit in his office of upholding and ſtrengthening man in the daies of adverſity: the Word of God is ſutable nouriſhment unto the ſpirit; it is ſtrong, and the admirable ſtrength of the ſpirit; it is ſweet, and the great refreſher of the ſpirit; it doth every way ſo glad and cheare mans ſpirit, that it giveth him moſt ſure grounds of ſtanding under the greateſt burdens; beleeve me, if that conſcience bee not informed by the Word, it is blind; and where it is not fed by the promiſes, it is infirme, and can never beare up our infirmities; *Vnleſſe thy Law*

Note.

Law had beene my delight, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine affliction, Pſal.119.92.

4. Faith. 4. Faith in operation; a conſcience full of infidelity is full of badneſſe, and feares, and ſinkings; but the more beleeving a mans heart is, the more ſound, and the more ſtout it is; *I had fainted unleſſe I had beleeved to ſee the goodneſſe of the Lord in the land of the living, Pſal.27.13.* I aſſure you, that faith is a grace that deales with the God of all comfort, and the Word of all comfort; and when diſtreſſes are like a ſtrong tyde beating much upon us, it is as a rock beating off

Note.

off all waves, and keepes the ſpirit in ſtrength and courage in times of trouble.

Laſtly, learne a duty of care and reſpect towards your ſpirits, that they may performe their office in upholding and ſtrengthening you in the daies of your adverſity; if that our ſpirits faile us we are undone; and to this purpoſe I ſhall adviſe you unto theſe things: *Vſe 4.*

Six things to be done about the ſpirit.

1. Abuſe not conſcience; the abuſe of our beſt friends is baſe, and we cannot with ſafety to our ſelves abuſe our ſpirits. Now men abuſe their conſcience 12. waies. 1. Abuſe it not.

Twelve waies of abuſing conſcience

1. By reſiſting the motions of conſcience; there is in conſcience a certaine naturall power, either by a watch word to give warning when men are bent

bent to ſinne, or to give the check after the commiſſion of ſin; it is a word within us, and behind us, it doth dictate to us and direct us: Now when a man ſhall croſſe conſcience in this worke, and notwithſtanding all that it ſaith and doth, go on in an evill way; this is the abuſe of conſcience by an act of reſiſtance.

2. By diſregarding the motions of conſcience; conſcience is ſpeaking, and that very loud; it many times groweth importunate with us, and ſtands in our way at every turne. Now when men turne away their eare, and paſſe over conſcience, finding out other matters of very purpoſe that they may not anſwer or follow conſcience, it is a great abuſe of conſcience, *Acts* 24.26.

3. By

3. By wounding and waſting conſcience, our ſpirits are tender things, and ſhould be gently uſed: it is as our eye, and every the ſmalleſt duſt offends it; it is as a glaſſe, and every knocke crackes it; it is a brittle ſhip, and we may ſoone make ſhipwrack of it, 1 *Tim.* 1.19. a ſinfull courſe will wound and waſt conſcience: but take me ſinnes committed againſt the light of nature, of Scripture, and of grace, and thoſe doe exceedingly gore conſcience.

4. By diſquieting and vexing conſcience; to bring trouble and torment into the ſoule, is no ſmall abuſe of the ſoule; it is the greateſt injurie that can bee done unto it, and this men doe

Conſcience vexed and how?

1. In forcing ſinne upon it.
2. In linking ſin with it.
3. In hindering the operations of it.

5. By tempting conſcience; ſome men proove divels unto their owne conſciences: partly in laying baites before it, ſetting conſcience in the preſence of vileneſſe, and uſing it to ſinfull companies, or ſinfull occaſions; certaine I am, that it is a hard matter to keepe all faire with conſcience, when and where there is nothing but vileneſſe: and partly in trying concluſions upon it; men play the Empericks with their conſciences, putting them upon the practiſe of things, the lawfullneſſe whereof they know not, or are not yet reſolved of.

Two waies of tempting conſcience.

6. By deading and ſearing conſcience; conſcience is and would

would be living and ſenſible, now when men brawne it by the daily and cuſtomary practiſes of horrible and groſſe ſins, and by diſuſance, they doe abuſe it, and ſo diſable it for all ſpirituall ſervice.

7. By ſmoothering the ſcruples of it; conſcience is many times full of reall and perſonall caſes, and ſometimes it is not able to reſolve it ſelfe, now if a man thorough pride or baſhfullneſſe ſhall keep all cloſe, and not ſeeke the ſatisfaction and reſolution thereof, this maketh the inward ranckling and feſtering and languiſhing thereof.

8. By blinding and darkening conſcience; knowledge is the eye and light of conſcience, for it ſeeth no more then it knoweth, now ignorance is the thing

thing that blindes conſcience, and without knowledge it is not good; it is a madneſſe in men to take away or to put out the light which ſhould guide and direct their owne conſciences in things to be beleeved and done.

9. By abaſing conſcience; conſcience was made for goodneſſe, to uphold and maintaine that, and for high and holy imployment, to doe that; now when it ſhall be uſed for a colour and cloake for ſinne and wickedneſſe (and men ſhall either make their ſins to carry the name of conſcience, as unwarranted opinions and practiſes now adaies doe; or make conſcience the cauſe of ſinne, as too many do, who cannot come to Church and receive the holy Sacraments, under a pretence that

that conſcience will not let them, a great belying and abuſing of conſcience, or to make conſcience a falſe witneſſe; faſtning untruths on it, as doe ſuch men that will take it upon their conſciences, that it is not ſo nor ſo as they are accuſed, when indeed it is ſo; conſcience is put to ſweare againſt conſcience, and to ſpeake againſt conſcience, and to accuſe and condemne, and to execute conſcience; this is the putting of conſcience unto the baſeſt offices that can be) and this way men do notably abuſe conſcience.

Conſcience abaſed and how?

10. By ſilencing conſcience; conſcience within us can and would ſpeake unto us, when as others cannot, or dare not to ſpeake unto us. Now when men command it unto ſilence, and

and ſtop the mouth thereof, and cannot endure that it ſhould be a voice either of direction or correction unto them, but bribe or choake conſcience, it is a great abuſe unto it.

11. By neglecting it; conſcience is worthy our beſt reſpect and attendance, and wee cannot do too much to cheriſh and refreſh it. Now when men ſhall runne from it, as many a Whore doth from her childe, leaving it upon the Pariſh, and let who will looke after it; when men ſhall never enquire after its health, but ſuffer it to take grievous falls and hurts; when men ſhall paſſe over its wounds not minding its cure; when men ſhall ſuffer it to want the beſt meanes of information, conſolation, and corroboration, and let it cry it ſelfe to death, they

they ſhew moſt horrible cruelty unto conſcience, and doe as groſſely abuſe it, as a Nurſe doth her ſucking babe, to whom ſhe denieth her care, and breaſts.

12. By overloading and entangling conſcience; conſcience can and will beare much; but yet as the overlading of a ſhip is her ſinking, ſo the overlading of conſcience by ſinnes, and ſorrowes, and feares, and impertinent ſcruples, is the abuſing and wronging of conſcience.

2. Lay out for the true good and ſtrengthening of the ſpirit within you; wee muſt endeavour to maintaine it in a ſtate of goodneſſe; cheriſhing and keeping up its goodneſſe that it die not; it will quit coſt for us ſo to do, the good and ſtrength of 2.

conſcience is our good and ſtrength at all times; let this then be your worke,

1. Remoove daily the evillneſſe of ſinne from within it, and before it, nothing is the undoing of conſcience but ſinne, and wee muſt endeavour after the daily bathing of it in the blood of the Lord Jeſus: the increaſing of its renovation by the Spirit, we muſt be much in the practiſe of repentance, and waſhing away thoſe ſins which lie upon conſcience, by the teares of godly ſorrow.

2. Feed and nouriſh it with its appointed food; the ſtrength of our naturall ſpirits ſtands in their nouriſhment, & it is as true of our ſpirituall ſpirits, conſcience muſt not be overfaſted nor overphyſick'd, but we muſt give it the Word in promiſe; Chriſt in

in merit, and the ſenſe of pardoning mercy, and wee fleſh and refreſh it.

3. Make uſe of the ſtrength of conſcience for your ſupportance : conſcience was made for uſe, the excellencie of it ſtands in its uſe, and if wee doe put conſcience unto it, it will bee our confidence in times of common feares and dangers, it will ſteele our hearts and beare up our mindes as ſtoutly and as ſafely, as the waters did the Arke of *Noah*; nay, it will proove an Arke or Garriſon unto us for our ſafety; learne therefore upon the acceſſe of all calamity to retire into conſcience, and commune with thine owne ſpirit, and call upon conſcience to doe its office and worke; keepe not conſcience idle within you; 3.

the leſſe you imploy it, the unfitter will it bee for your ſtrength and ſervice; call upon it to act its owne proper operations, and you ſhall find the comfort of it unto you in your afflictions.

4. 4. Secure the ſound ſpirit within you; it is our upholdment and ſecurity, and therfore by an holy care and watchfullneſſe keepe it above all keepings, *Prov.*4.23. Some men have made ſhipwracke of conſcience and loſt it, 1 *Tim.* 1. 19. and our condition in this life is full of danger, conſcience within us, is in the midſt of many and malicious adverſaries, and in as much danger by evill men and divels as ever, and it ſtands us much upon to bee watchfull; and to bee alwaies fearefull and

and jealous, leaſt both we and it become a prey unto Satan, to this end, 1. Shut carnall ſecurity out of doores; 2. Avoide all occaſions of ſinning, play not upon the hole of the Aſpe, and come not neare the den of the Cockatrice; 3. Wiſely withſtand temptations unto all ſin, and wickedneſſe; 4. Keep cloſe to the rule in a holy and religious practiſe.

5. Give contentment unto conſcience; in nothing willingly offend or diſpleaſe it; this is the wages that is due unto it for ſuſtaining our infirmity: we are not to diſpleaſe ſuch a friend that beareth all our coſts and charges, and taketh upon him the burden of all our cares; and doth not conſcience much more for us? 5.

The contenting of conscience stands in 2. things.

Learne then, 1. To give God content: in the pleasing of God you greatly content conscience; the servant hath no reason to bee offended all the while his master is quieted. 2. To promote conscience in its power, unto its place: conscience must bee more worth unto us then the world; wealth must not buy it, worship cannot equall it, and wee must not preferre the pleasing of men or our selves unto it, it is the discontent of conscience to bee undervalued or to bee put off at low rates: and surely, if the government of conscience bee despised, it cannot bee pleased; conscience is conscience, and will and must bee knowne and acknowledged to bee conscience; you must heare

heare and obey conſcience; goe and doe what conſcience enjoyneth, wee muſt worke, and ſtop, and feare, and hope, and give, and lend, and reſtore when conſcience bids us, conſcience muſt not be croſſed and vexed by us wittingly or willingly, it deſerves better of us.

6. Prevent the wound and torment of it, take care that you make it not terrible and troubleſome unto your ſelves; if it be your burden how ſhall it then be able to ſuſtaine your infirmity? we reade forward in the Text, *a wounded ſpirit who can beare?* 6.

THE BVRDEN of the ſpirit under its wounds.

But a wounded ſpirit who can beare?

HEere wee have the impotencie of mans ſpirit againſt inward perplexities laid down by way of an interrogation, which is a moſt vehement Ne-

gation, *who can beare?* (i.e.) no man can beare it: in which words the Holy Ghoſt doth teach us theſe two things:

1. That the ſpirit of man may be wounded.

2. That the wounded ſpirit is inſupportable.

Wee will begin with the poſſible eſtate of the ſpirit or conſcience of man, which is this,

Doct. 2. Mans ſpirit may be greatly wounded.

That it may come under great and fearefull wounds: I am poore and needy, and my heart is wounded within me, ſaith *David, Pſal.* 109.22. and againe he tells us, that *his ſpirit was overwhelmed within him, Pſal.* 142.3. we finde wicked men, and good men wounded in their ſpirits unto great vexation. I ſhall briefely open unto you three things:

1. What

1. What a wounded ſpirit is?

2. The difference of the wound in the good and bad.

3. The grounds and cauſes of this wound.

For the firſt, know that a wounded ſpirit, is a ſpirit, which for the time doth ſenſibly ſuffer miſerable, and in a ſort, helliſh evills in a diſtreſſefull, uncomfortable, fearefull, reſtleſſe and deſperate manner. 1. A wounded ſpirit what.

There goeth to the making of the wounded ſpirit theſe things:

1. Miſerable, and in a degree, helliſh evills; I ſay that innumerable evills doe compaſſe the ſoule; it is not one miſery, but an army which doth at this time follow a man; *thou reneweſt thy plagues againſt me, and thou increaſeſt thy wrath upon*

on me, changes and armies of ſorrowes are againſt mee, ſaith *Iob* 10.17. the ſoule is caſt into a peck of troubles, and into the abundance of calamity; yea, and it is ſuch kind of miſery which nothing can better repreſent and ſhaddow then the very paines of the damned; the ſoule for the time feeleth that gnawing worme, and lieth (as it were) boyling and frying in hell fire; there is no torment like unto it, it goeth beyond all, having a fullneſſe and exquiſiteneſſe of miſery in it.

2. The feeling of thoſe miſerable evills; a man hath now his conſcience opened, and is made to know and apprehend the extremities of miſeries which now lieth upon him even with fullneſſe of weight; the ſpirit of man is living, and very

very tender, and miſery and diſtreſſe is felt. In a ſeared conſcience there is nothing but ſenſeleſneſſe, for that is paſt feeling, *Epheſ.* 4. 19. but in a wounded conſcience there is ſome life and tenderneſſe; the practicall notions are not quite extinguiſhed; the naturall light is ſtill burning, and indeed miſeries would not be miſeries unto us, did they not touch us to the quick.

3. The manner of the apprehending of thoſe miſerable evills, which is every way moſt grievous; for

Firſt of all it is with much diſtreſſe of ſoule; the ſoule is thereby filled with unſpeakeable anguiſh and paine, it is as it were put upon the rack, and put to torture and torment in extremity; *my ſoule is ſore troubled* Pſal. 77.

ſaith

ſaith *David*, *Pſal.6.3.* there is ſuch a ſtrange oppreſſion upon the ſpirit that the heavineſſe of it is unto death, *Mat.26.37.*

Secondly, it is without all comfort unto the ſpirit: it is all darkneſſe without the mixture of light; the ſpirit of a man is ſo drunke up, that it now waſteth it ſelfe in daily heavineſſe; *O that my griefe were well weighed*, ſaith *Iob 6.2. My ſoule refuſed comfort*, ſaith *David*, *Pſal 77.2.* a man under the wound of conſcience is ſo under the power of diſcomfort, and ſo ſwallowed up of heavineſſe, that the ſoule can enjoy no ſpirituall or naturall comfort for the time, every thing doth terrifie it, nothing doth comfort it.

Thirdly, it is a ſpirit filled with horror and feare; and that

that not only in the apprehenſion of preſent miſery, but by the expectation of more and future evills; the wounded ſpirit is a ſpirit of horrible bondage, and keepes a man in bondage to ſervile terrors, trembling thoughts, the dreadfull ſound is alwaies heard, and ſuch men doe create, meditate, and multiplie feares, the ſpirit of trembling doth ſo overtake them, that they are a terror unto themſelves; they daily apprehend nothing but guilt, and wrath, and death, and hell, and damnation, *Iob* 15. 21. *Deut.* 28. 65. *Dan.* 5. *Ier.* 20. 4.

Fourthly, it is full of unquietneſſe, and daily toſſings and tumblings; it is exceeding reſtleſſe and raging; O the diſquiet of a wounded conſcience, the ſea in time of tempeſt is not more

more raging and rowling; madneſſe is not more working and unquiet; the plague and other impetuous diſeaſes are not more vexing and reſtleſſe to a man then a wounded ſpirit is; *Thou keepeſt mine eyes waking*, ſaith *David*, *Pſal.* 77. 4. *When I held my tongue my bones conſumed, thine hand is heavie upon me day and night*, *Pſal.* 2. 3,4. *My ſore ran and ceaſed not in the night*, *Pſal.* 77. 2. *Why art thou ſo diſquieted within me O my ſoule*, *Pſal.* 43. 5.

Laſtly, the ſpirit is caſt into the devouring gulfe of deſperation; ſuch under the feeling of their ſpirituall miſeries, doe conceive a deſperateneſſe of condition; ſuch do now begin to damme up all the ſprings of mercy, and drie up the bloud of Chriſt, and cloſe up the doore

doore of grace againſt themſelves; and that I may not bee miſtaken in this point, note with mee two things,

1. That in ſtrictneſſe of divinity wee are to make a difference betweene a wounded and a deſperate conſcience; the one runs beyond the other in many things. *Note.*

2. That in every wounded conſcience there is a degree of deſperation; ſometimes and in ſome men it runneth in more compleatneſſe, when men take their ſinnes in ſuch an high manner, and with ſuch an over-reaching power, as that neither mercy can, or will eaſe them; they ſet an eternall night within their ſoules without hopes of a morning, framing to themſelves an utter impoſſibility of pardoning mercy as

Deſperation in every wounded conſcience compleatly or incompleatly.

as *Caine*, *Gen.*4.13. and *Iudas*, *Mat.*27.5. and this is a distresse of distresses, and a greater evill then the disease it selfe. Sometimes againe some men under the wound of the soule are more incompleately desperate, they onely thinke and feare that God will cast them away and shut up his mercies and loving kindnesse from them; heare they lie languishing and bleeding, and are only holpen with this, that though they cannot apply, yet they dare not deny unto themselves Gods mercy, and Christ in merit: and this was the case of *David* under his wound, *Psal.*77.7,8,9,10.

Note.

4. The time of mans feeling this misery and calamity; I know well that the wound of the spirit is graduall; in some it is more then in other, and it hath

hath not alike continuance in all; in ſome it is but for a little ſpace, they quickly recover of their diſeaſe, and attaine refreſhment and comfort, as we may ſee in *Peter, he went out and wept bitterly*, there was his wound in ſpirit; but hee could ſpeake comfortably and confidently to Chriſt after his Reſurrection, this ſhewed that he was not long in the agony; *Paul* lay three daies in the affliction and diſtreſſe of ſpirit, and then leaſt hee ſhould bee ſwallowed up of too much ſorrow, *Ananias* was ſent unto him to refreſh and comfort him; But as God gives ſpeedie eaſe to ſome, ſo hee is pleaſed to let others lie a longer time under the perplexities of a wounded ſpirit. *David* cries out, *ſhall I never bee remembred, Pſal.* 13. 1.

The degrees and the continuance of this woũd in men different.

My

My ſoule is ſore troubled, but Lord how long wilt thou delay? Pſal.6.3. Now let the time be ſhorter or longer, *All the daies of the afflicted are evill, Prov.15.15.* and all the while a man doth feele this evill, ſo long the wound doth remaine.

2. Wee muſt know, that though the wound of conſcience is incident unto good and bad, yet it is with a great and wide difference; the wounds of ſpirit in wicked men are,

The difference that is betweene the wound of the wicked & the wound of the godly in 5. things.

1. Legall; they ſpring up in the ſoule from the terrible operation of the law within their ſoules; the Law of God hath an extreame curſe written in it, and this it writes in the conſcience of every wicked man, I ſay by its ſpirituall vigour it gets within the conſcience of a wicked

wicked man, and ſo the wound is made: there is no worke of the Goſpell as well as of the Law, but all is done and made by the Law alone, in all unregenerate men.

2. Pænall and judiciall, ſuch men lie under the juſtice and wrath of God, and for feare of hell and puniſhment are moſt of all caſt downe, ſo that were there no puniſhment to bee endured, it were not the diſpleaſure or offence of God by ſin that ſhould amaze them; *My puniſhment is greater then I am able to beare*, ſaith *Caine*, *Gen.*4. 13. whereas the wound in the godly is paternall and penitentiall, a fatherly chaſtiſement of God for tryall, wherein the childe of God is wounded moſt at heart by the deepe apprehenſion of his ſinnes, and the diſ-

displeasure of his Father against sin, or

3. Violent; the wound in them worketh with more and greater violence, having more of the fire of hell in it; such men are wholly under the terrors of the wound, having no assistance from God, no hope of ease, no glimpse of light, and no allayment by the saving power of the Gospell, which the godly doe finde first or last, more or lesse in degree.

4. Mortall, the wound in the issue prooveth desperate and incurable, and though for a time their spirits may be benummed by the application of false meanes, that so there may seeme to bee a cessation of the raging thereof, yet the wound remaineth still; they carry it with them to the grave, to the judge-

judgement ſeate of God, yea and to hell it ſelfe; whereas God doth in due time, and by good meanes make a compleat cure of all the wounds in the ſpirits of his; there being no diſeaſe in their ſoule, but as it is poſſible of cure, ſo it is actually cured.

5. Hurtfull; the wounds of wicked men do them no good but hurt, they are hereby driven from God, and fall away more and more; whereas the wound in the godly is an occaſion of much good unto them, by the wounding of their ſpirits they are wrought unto theſe ſix things.

The benefit of ſpirituall wounds in the godly ſerve in 6. things.

1. Senſibleneſſe of the bitter and ſad effects of ſinne; God hath waies enough to make his feele their ſinnes; as his Word, which ſtrikes hard on the eare, threat-

1. Senſe of ſin.

Three waies of feeling ſin

threatning ſinne and wickedneſſe, then if men hate reproofe, and harden their hearts, God hath his rod; he ſheweth man his judgement, and in that mans ſinne and his anger, by which if man will not learne righteouſneſſe, and feele the bitterneſſe of his ſinne, then troubles ariſe in conſcience, that ſhall be awakened, and diſ-eaſed, that ſhall come upon man with feares and horrors for the ſins that hee hath committed; ſo that hereby he ſhall bee made to poſſeſſe the ſinnes of his youth, and to know his own wickedneſſe, as *Iob* and *David* did.

Job 13.26
Pſal.51.3

2. Humility and emptineſſe of ſoule; the wounds of the ſpirit doth weaken the proud and perverſe conceits of mans owne ſtrength and righteouſneſſe;

2. Humility of ſoule

neſſe; God by theſe doth make men vile in their owne eyes and opinions; it is ſtrange to ſee what riſing humours are found in the godly before the wound befalleth them, their blood is exceedingly over-heated; but now by an humbled ſpirit God doth worke them to an humble ſpirit, carrying them as to ſin deniall, ſo to ſelfe deniall.

3. Enquiry after ſinne; theſe wounds of the ſpirit doe make us reflect on the evill of ſinne, and to ſearch more ſeriouſly and narrowly into what wee have done, when the ſpirit is wounded it is moſt in agitation, and in a manner taken up wholly with reflexive acts; it is oftimes with a troubled conſcience as it is with troubled waters, the troubling of which

3. Search after ſin

fetcheth up that mud and filth which lay ſunke and buried below; men doe begin to ſee more clearely what they have done by what they ſuffer, let God trouble *Ioſephs* brethren, and this preſents unto them their long paſt guilt in ſelling their brother, *Gen.*42.21. and when Iſrael was troubled with Gods wrath and mortality, they could now read their ſinnes in Gods countenance, *Pſal.* 90. 7,8.

4.Confeſſion of ſin.

4. Confeſſion and acknowledgement of ſinne; deepe wounds provoke unto vomiting, and although we are naturally as apt to conceale as to commit ſinne, yet ſpirituall wounds will not long bee hid; *David* like a childe had hurt himſelfe, and hee hides it; hee had taken downe poyſon and keepes

keepes ſilence; but at laſt the wound feſtred, and his heart was too heavie for his body, ſo as hee roareth for the diſquietment of his ſpirit, and he is made moſt freely and humbly to acknowledge his ſinne unto God, *Pſal.*32.3,4,5.

5. Deteſtation of ſin; ſpirituall wounds doe worke in the godly deepe hatred againſt ſinne; O this lying under the ſenſe of wrath, this racking under the ſtrong and piercing accuſations of conſcience for ſin, doth incenſe the ſoule with the deepeſt loathing of ſinne that may be, ſo that the broken ſinner ſaith unto it, get thee hence, *Eſa.*30.22. 5. Hatred of ſin.

6. Reformation of life, endeavours of obedience for the future, with watchfull feare againſt ſinne, is the fruit of the 6. Change of life.

ſpirituall wound in Gods children; ſuch doe ſay, now I finde and feele what it is to venture on ſtollen waters, and what it is to taſte the pleaſures of ſinne for a ſeaſon, O I am now in the flames, I have found a dart ſtriken thorough my liver, and *what have I to doe any more with idols, Hoſea* 14.8. If God will once heale my ſoule, and pardon me my ſin, I will not ſinne againſt him as I have done in time paſt, but I will take him for my God, and doe unto him all the poſſible ſervice for his honour that I can.

3. Cauſes of the wound in mans ſpirit, 9.

For the grounds occaſioning the wound of the ſpirit in men, I finde them very different; and they are more generall, or ſpeciall and particular; I ſhall name ſome of them.

1. Sinne committed

1. The wound in mans ſpirit

rit is cauſed by ſinne; if any thing diſhearten, feare and diſtreſſe the ſoule, it is ſinne; every ſinne committed and lying upon the conſcience is a wound to conſcience; *Now when you ſin ſo againſt the brethren yee wound their conſcience*, ſaith *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* 8.12. whence I inferre, if another mans ſinne will wound another mans conſcience; then much more a mans owne ſinne will wound his owne conſcience; this is true, * that all mans miſerable and penall evills, whether inward or outward, doe follow his ſinfull evills; had there beene no ſinne there had beene no wound, and thus man is the entire cauſe of his owne wounding; if we bee taſting of the forbidden fruit, ſucking at the pleaſures of ſin, and doe ſwallow downe the ſecret

* *Malum culpæ trahit malum pœnæ.*

Hoſea 13 9.

cret poyſon thereof, no marvaile if it caſt our ſoules and and ſpirits into paine, and vexation, and unſpeakeable ſtretchings and ſtrainings. Note, that as it is all ſin in generall, ſo it is the greatneſſe, aggravations, and repetitions of ſome ſins in particular, which doe greatly wound conſcience within man, I meane, unnaturall ſins, ſuch as are ſinnes of blood, and ſins of uncleanneſſe: unreaſonable ſins committed contrary to the cleare light of reaſon, as ſinnes of Rebellion and Treaſon, found in *Achitophel* and *Iudas*: formall ſins, which is the ſlubbering over Gods ſervices out of cuſtome and for faſhion, when a man knoweth he ought to doe them with holineſſe of affection and highneſſe of reverence; locall ſins, the ſinnes of

What ſins do moſt of all wound conſcience

of a mans calling and place, ſuch as are idleneſſe, unfaithfullneſſe and unrighteouſneſſe in buying, ſelling, borrowing, lending, reſtoring and the like: ſins againſt vowes ſolemnely made againſt ſin, yea and ſins of repetition, men going over the ſame ſins often; all theſe and other the like ſinnes doe not a little wound conſcience in men.

2. The wound is cauſed by the ſenſible apprehenſion of the debt and guilt of ſin; guilt apprehended in depth is the greateſt wounding of conſcience that may bee, when a man comes to know his tranſgreſſions, and to poſſeſſe the ſinnes of his youth; finding the faſtning of ſin in the venome of it upon his ſoule, this is the great maladie and diſeaſe of the ſoule, 2. Sin felt.

there is nothing ſo mortall and deadly as ſin is, and there is nothing more terrible and troubleſome then for a man to ſee himſelfe a ſinner without a Saviour, and to reade his own ſins unto himſelfe in an unpardonable manner; it is one thing to reade a ſin in the Word, and another thing for the Word and conſcience to make us to reade it in our ſelves in all the offence and danger and damnation of it, *Pſal.* 51. 3. *Iob* 13. 25, 26.

3. The Law over preſſed or over applied.

The wound is cauſed by the over-taking of the threats and enforcements of the Law unto a mans ſelfe: the Law is terrible, and cauſeth the bondage of the ſpirit, putting a man to his deepeſt diſtreſſes, when as ſinne and conſcience doth meete and mingle with it.

There

There are two things about the Law cauſing the wound of ſpirit in man.

Two things about the Law.

1. One is, The unskilfull managing of it by the Miniſters, they preaching it without reference to the Goſpell, as it was delivered on Mount Sinai.

2. Another is, The overfaſtning of the Law in its terror and execration upon a mans ſelfe; the Law hath an extreame curſe written in it ſelfe; it renders up a man a ſinner to the ſeverity of Gods juſtice, and irreſiſtibility of his wrath, it powers in the fiery indignation of the Almighty, and acknowledgeth no Saviour at all. Now when a man ſhall write downe after the Law, that he is a man every way under the execration and exaction of the Law, this is the ſadneſſe and ſickneſſe

of his ſpirit, *Rom.7.9. When the Law came ſinne revived and I died.*

4. The wound is made by the taſting of divine wrath; when God is not felt in his love, but that there is a folding up the former intimations from the ſoule, there is a mighty wound in the ſpirit, as we may ſee in *David*, *Pſal.77.* the firſt 10. verſes; how much more horrible and wounding to the ſpirit is the apprehenſion of the angry and wrathfull face of God ſetting it ſelfe againſt a man? *Iobs* mind was exerciſed with this, and it was his wounding; *The arrowes of the Almighty are within me, the poyſon whereof drinkes up my ſpirit, the terrors of God do ſet themſelves in array againſt mee,* &c. *Iob 6.* 3, 4.

4. Taſting of divine wrath.

5. The

5. The wound is made by the failing of teſtimonie from conſcience unto man upon repaire made unto it; the good or evill day of a Chriſtian is ſet by the voice of conſcience unto him: Now when conſcience is ſilent, and ſhall ſpeake neither good nor bad unto a Chriſtian, when as no teſtimony at all ſhall ſtand up, but after great and ſtudious enquiry no verdict can bee obtained; this is a ſad wound to the ſpirit, and it doth exceedingly diſtract and divide a Chriſtian. Note the effects of conſcience in ſilence,

5. Failing of conſcience

The miſery of conſcience in ſilence in three things.

1. It giveth man but a negative eſtate, and that cannot ſatisfie and ſettle the ſoule; it is not enough to my quiet that God lookes not as mine enemy, but hee muſt looke like a friend on me. 2. It

2. It giveth ſuſpition of a neutrall eſtate, ſo as a man cannot tell whether God and conſcience be for him or againſt him.

3. It breeds a ſuſpition of a bad eſtate; withdrawments and ſuſpenſions are ſometimes the fore-runners of bitter intentions.

6. Accuſations of conſcience

6. The wound is in the ſpirit from the over great accuſing power of conſcience; conſcience in its accuſations ſhewing the guiltineſſe of ſin, and expreſſing the anger of God towards a man for ſin: in a cheerefull and excuſing conſcience we may behold a gratious God accepting and acquitting us; in a ſilent conſcience wee can ſuſpect a doubtfull God, wee know not which way God is or will be unto us; and in an accuſing

Note.

ſing conſcience we doe behold an angry God, and our ſelves moſt miſerable creatures: when a Chriſtian ſhall bee totally under the accuſations of conſcience; that his conſcience ſhall ſpeake nothing to him, but that his heart is baſe and vile, and that in ſuch and ſuch particular paſſages of his life he was not right and perfect, but hollow and hypocriticall, when I ſay conſcience ſhall thus charge ſin upon men; this is the time of their wounding, as wee may ſee in *Iudas*, *Mat.* 27.5.

7. Another thing which maketh the wound within us, is an evill jealouſie, and an overhard opinion of our ſelves and eſtates towards God. Some men fall out with themſelves, and other men fall from themſelves

7. Selfe jealouſies.

ſelves; ſhall I ſay that they cenſure themſelves, and charge themſelves falſely? concluding againſt a ſtate of grace, and charging themſelves with hypocriſie and inſincerity without juſt cauſe; Sure I am, this is too too frequent among Gods children, who upon ſuch grounds as theſe, doe miſ-judge themſelves, and thereby make too great a wound within their ſpirits: I ſay becauſe they finde within themſelves the want of ſuch meaſure of graces, and expreſſions of obedience which they once had, deſire to have, and ſee others have; when they ſee within themſelves a partiall and temporary indiſpoſednesſe unto ſpirituall required duties; when as gifts and graces for a time lie hid and dead in reſpect

of

of vigour and ſenſible operations: when all endeavours ſeeme to be fruitleſſe, and a Chriſtian finds to his ſeeming the ordinances to go and come without all life and power unto him; paſſing no influence of bettering into his ſoule. Now hee ſits him downe in griefe; and the ſoule begins not onely to miſgive or miſtruſt it ſelfe; but to queſtion the truth of all, and it not only feares but concludes that ſurely the hands were waſhed in vaine; and whatſoever hath beene done in religion and in the ſervice of God, it hath beene done in hypocriſie, *Pſal.*73.13. and can you conceive how deepely this doth wound the ſpirit of a man?

8. A next thing greatly wounding to the ſpirit of man is

New risings of old sins.

is the New risings of old sins: I meane when those sins which long since were committed, and long since bewailed, and long since renounced, and wee long since did obtaine within our hearts some comfortable assurance of their pardon, do meete us in their guilt not yet remooved, as a debt not yet discharged, and as an evill not yet thoroughly healed; this causeth miserable trouble within the soule, and upon this, these conceits fall in; Surely this sin of mine is not pardoned, why would God remember it? Surely there was but a skinning over the soare, my heart was never healed by Sanctification; how could it be that my sins should haunt mee againe, this is now the sickneſſe and death of many a soule.

9. Lastly,

9. Laſtly, I conceive that this maketh the wound in the ſpirit of man, the want of ſome deſired good; it is not the abſence of good generally conſidered which maketh the ſpirit to bee wounded; for there are ſuch whoſe unfeelingneſſe is ſuch, that they have no ſenſe of ſinne, nor of any ſpirituall want lying upon them; but that which maketh the wound of the ſpirit to a man is this, when his wants are preſented unto him, and their ſupplies are ſuſpended and denied; the ſoule would have mercy, and mercy is denied him; he would have eaſe, and he ſeekes it, and yet he is kept in miſery: when a mans prayers makes not their returnes, but a man calles and none anſwers; comforts delayed or denied do breake the heart, and greatly wound the heart.

9. Want of ſome good deſired.

I passe on to the next point,

Doct. 3. The wound suffered yet not borne.

That a wounded spirit is a burden insupportable by the sonnes of men; no man can beare it; men must suffer and endure the perplexities thereof, but beare it (that is) to sustaine a mans selfe under it, no man can, this wound cannot bee borne with ease, so as men enduring and feeling it, should make nothing of it; but it is with great difficulty and disquietment; A burning feaver carrying with it the inflammation of the spirits is not borne without much sense and horror; so a wounded spirit even by the stoutest of spirits cannot bee borne then with strongest and strangest torments, men must yeeld themselves unto it, and lie downe under it of necessity; nay it is a wound unsupporta-

A two-fold bearing.

1. With ease.

2. With difficulty.

Simile.

ble

ble to all men that are vexed with it; there is no withſtanding this wound by any man, nor any ſtanding under it by any man; unto bad men it hath beene unſupportable; O how grievous was it unto *Caine*, who cries out, *My puniſhment is more then I can beare*, *Gen.*4.13. *Iudas* out of the trouble felt by it, hangs himſelfe to be rid out of it, *Mat.*27.4. many thorough the weight and torment of it, have beene forced to throw themſelves downe from high mountaines, to ſtabb, and poyſon, and drowne themſelves; nay unto good men, whoſe grace and ſtrength was great and much, this wound hath beene wounding, witneſſe *David*, *Pſal.* 32.3,4. *Hezekiah*, *Ezek.*38.13,14. and holy *Iob* in his whole Hiſtory, and Chriſt

The burden is too great
1. To good men.
2. To bad men.

Christ himselfe suffering this wound (without sin) in his humane spirit, cried out under its burden, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* and it cannot be otherwise, if we consider these reasons.

Reasons prooving the burden of a wounded conscience are seaven.

1. First, a wounded spirit is a burden unto it selfe, *why hast thou set me as a marke against thee, so that I am a burden unto my selfe,* saith *Iob* 7.20. Now all wounds and burdens that are extrinsecall a mans spirit can beare, but that which lieth within it selfe it cannot; you know if the ship bee whole the waves doe onely beate against the side, they onely threaten, they sinke her not; but if shee have a crack and leake within her selfe, she cannot endure the stirrings of the winds, nor tossings of the waves, but doth easily

Simile.

ſily make her ſelfe her owne grave; thus it is with conſcience, it cannot be both patient and burden, and under all wounds it ſelfe being wounded, it is that which makes the burden inſupportable.

Secondly, there is no outward thing which can relieve a wounded ſpirit, it is not all the gold of the Indies, nor all the favour of Princes, nor all the friends on earth that can aſſwage or cure this wound; a troubled mind impaireth health, drieth up the blood, waſteth the marrow, pines away the fleſh, conſumes the bones, and makes all pleaſures painefull to a man; nothing doth comfort it, but terrifie it; the light doth not comfort him, would God ſaith he it were night; the darkneſſe doth terrifie 2.

rifie him, his ſleepe forſakes him, and his dreames doe not pleaſe him, hee lieth on his bed boyling in diſquietneſſe and wiſheth for day: conſcience can relieve againſt all wounds but its owne; Suppoſe the wound to lie in a mans honour, friends, and eſtate, conſcience can heale all that, but it ſelfe being wounded in the leaſt degree, it is beyond the cure and comfort of all outward things; we have a ſaying, that no borrowing part can helpe the lending part; what helpe can the hand returne unto the heart? if I wound my hand the heart can yeeld helpe; if the nerves which draw more inwardly be wounded, yet the heart can helpe, it hath blood and ſpirits and heate enough; but if the heart it ſelfe be wounded what ſhall help? Third-

Simile.

Thirdly, the ſpirit under its wounds retaineth the ſenſibleneſſe of unpardoned guilt, which of all things is moſt raging, and makes the ſoule moſt comfortleſſe; when a man ſhall apprehend his ſins to bee unpardonable, or unpardoned, it keepes him in a perpetuall rowling and boyling, it is a condition that can no way be endured, for ſin lieth ſtill at the doore haunting and vexing a man. 3.

Fourthly, a ſpirit that is wounded hath to deale with the mighty and irreſiſtible power of God; Now the ſtrength of any burden is according to the ſtrength of him with whom wee have to deale; under the wound of conſcience God is following his owne cauſe with his owne arguments, 4.

ments, and hee is now avenging the wrong that is done to his mercy and patience, and is it poſſible for the creature to ſuſtaine it ſelfe? can we imagin any enabling againſt Gods preſſure and power? a man while he is to deale with men may beare up himſelfe, and hee may have much ſtrength of wit or impudencie of face to outface all enquiries, but when men are to deale with an all-ſeeing, and an all knowing, and an all-ſinne revenging God, the might of whoſe glory is able to confound men and Angels, if he once ſhall ſtart up our guilts, and breake into our ſoules; if he ſend a trembling heart, and ſorrowfull mind, if himſelfe be witneſſe againſt us, and by his power impriſon and ſhut us up, we cannot avoid it,

or

or beare it; time will not eaſe us, company will not eaſe us, peace will not eaſe us, when he wounds none can heale but himſelfe.

Fifthly, the wound of the ſpirit is accompanied with the accuſations of conſcience; conſcience cannot be bribed or put of, there is no flying from it; the ſtrength of conſcience is awakened, and her cruelty roareth, conſcience under wounding doth arraigne, evidence, condemne, and bind over unto eternall wrath for ſin; and it is of an indefatigable, unreſiſtible and unavoidable power in working, a man by flight, or death, or friends, may eſcape the Magiſtrates hand, but by neither can he poſſibly ever eſcape from a diſpleaſed conſcience, a tormented conſcience cannot

flie from God, nor can a man flie from it.

6. Sixthly, the wound of ſpirit is of an eternall nature, all other wounds end in death, and are therefore the more tollerable becauſe they be temporall; but this wound endeth not in death, if it be not gratiouſly cured, it is the beginning of hell upon earth unto the wicked, and it continues him in hell upon earth, and after death, it is that worme which ſtill is gnawing and never dying; death is not the end of this miſery, and this maketh it the more intollerable to be borne, what heart can poſſibly ſuſtaine it ſelfe under infinite and endleſſe miſeries?

7. Seventhly and laſtly, when and whilſt men are under the wounds of conſcience, Satan is ſtrongly

ſtrongly and ſubtly working; ſuch is Satans cowardize that he takes us at the weakeſt, and ſuch is his malice that hee will yet weaken us wee being weakened already; Satan falling in with the bruiſings and ſores of mens ſoules, and bringing in the fretting gall of hell, and powring forth the ſharpeſt vinegar of moſt violent objections, the ſoule tortured and the wound enlarged, and conſcience overcharged; Satan now tells the ſinner of the impoſſibility of mercy, and uncapableneſſe of the bloud of Chriſt, hee now followeth him with ſtrange endictments, repreſentations, and concluſions, yea and arguments of inſincerity and hypocriſie, and this adds to the weight and maketh the burden intollerable; there is no ſuch

trouble as to be daily troubled with the divell.

Having thus opened the wound unto you, and its burden, I ſhall fall upon the Application of both, in this manner:

Firſt, bee wiſe to know the woundedneſſe of your ſpirits, and to conſider what is your condition thereby. I preſſe you to this the rather upon theſe grounds,

Vſe 1.

1. Becauſe a multitude of men are under ſearednesſe and ſenſleſneſſe of conſcience, 2 *Tim.* 4. 2. they are dead and ſleepie, their ſpirits never mooye or work within them, and let mee tell you, that a wounded ſpirit is infinitely beyond a dead ſpirit; a troubled conſcience is a mercy in reſpect of a ſeared conſcience; conſcience in trouble may happily proove

A ſeared ſpirit is worſe then a wounded ſpirit.

proove conſcience in goodneſſe and peace, and a cure may follow it: when iron is put into the fire it may be made pliable and receive another impreſſion, and ſo we doe not know what may be the good iſſue of a wounded ſpirit unto man; but you cannot hope this of conſcience continuing under ſearednesſe. *Simile.*

2. Becauſe men ordinarily take leaſt notice of their ſpirituall wounds in their cauſe and cure; they are lumpiſh and heavie, full of ſad thorghts & evill imaginations, & many times they roare and complaine, but this is their ignorance, they know not what ailes them; they are ſo miſtaken in the cauſe & buſineſſe in hand, that they judge themſelves to bee under ſome bodily diſtempers by melancholie Men doe miſtake the ſpirits wound.

passions, and other violent humours, a great madnesse and ignorance in men; and being fallen upon this point, let mee tell you that melancholy prevailing in men doth come very neere to the trouble of conscience, but it is not the wound of conscience here spoken of; Satan makes it his bait, and man makes it his burden, but wee may not make it this wound; concerning which I shall yeeld you two things,

The operation of melancholie in man.

1. That melancholy given way unto doth corrupt the imagination, and those actions of the minde or the next instruments by which the minde worketh, that therewith the heart, affections, and conscience are greatly distempered with feare and griefe, and doe conceive a many unechewable miseries

ries againſt it ſelfe, againſt which fancies and imaginations, no arguments of reaſon can prevaile, and this darkning vapour and blackiſh fume thus affecting the ſoule, doth add torment unto it, making it for the time uncapable of the ſenſe of comfort, I ſay this humour of melancholy hath very ſubtile ſpirits that flie up into the braine, and the inſtrument of diſcretion and there they lodge their contagious qualities, which corrupt the ſpirits, and annoy both heart and braine; whence ariſe ſtrange imaginations and fancies in the head. Head and heart having entercourſe, and body and ſoule being united, the ſoule is not thereby a little troubled.

2. That what ever vaine men judge; melancholy is not a ſpi-

rituall maladie, or the wounded spirit here spoken of; the difference betweene both is great; as

Melancholy is not the wounded spirit, proved by 5. reasons.

1. In the ground and cause, the troubles of melancholy ariseth either from naturall causes in the body, or from supposed and fained causes, the imagination conceiving things to bee so and so, when indeed nothing is really so; the trouble of conscience ariseth from the sight and sense of sin in the soule, the apprehension of divine wrath due to man for sin and such like spirituall and reall causes.
2. In the seate of it; troubles from melancholy seate themselves in the head,

head and naturall ſpirits, the man having loſt the right uſe of his wits, and being miſtaken in his imagination, in conceits becomming monſtrous; true trouble is in the conſcience and whole ſoule of man.

3. In the cure of it; phyſick may cure the one, it being a bodily diſeaſe or diſtemper; but it is not all artificiall and naturall meanes that can cure the wounds of the ſpirit.

4. In the effects of it; melancholy maketh a man ſimple and abſurd in his thoughts touching himſelfe; ſuch men will ſpeake to you and yet conceive themſelves to bee without head or

heart and life; they will tell you that they see Divels and feele Divels within them; and you shall heare many odd things from them, when as trouble of conscience looseth not it selfe, but speakes according to the truth and feeling of it selfe.

5. In the enlargement of it; melancholy seldome or never worketh griefe for Gods dishonour; it is not touched with sorrow for sin, and when it is cured, it gives not a man any ground and measure of spirituall joy; it enforceth not a man to Christ for ease and rest; it quickens no man to prayer and duty;

all

all which the wounds of the ſpirit in ſome men doe moſt kindly and ſavingly.

Thirdly and laſtly, let us know our ſelves rightly in our troubles of mind, and we ſhall the better know our ſelves in our comforts; nothing doth ſo prepare the heart for comforts, and make us to relliſh our comforts as the ſenſe of ſoule trouble and heavineſſe: I dare affirme that if wee did know and finde our ſpirituall wants and wounds more, wee would and ſhould withall bee more upon the waies and feelings of comfort then we are.

Secondly, let us have compaſſion on ſuch who are wounded in ſpirit; you ſee that ſuch is the weight of their wounds, as *neither eye hath ſeene, eare hath* *Vſe 2.*

hath heard, or tongue of man is able fully to expresse, none can in any way of expression speake of it, but such as have more or lesse felt it; and shall we passe by any that are labouring under this burden, not yeelding them our pitie? 'tis a foolish madnesse in many to thinke this sicknesse and this wound to bee but passion, conceit, and mopishnesse put into their heads by reading good books, or hearing some strict Preachers, or melancholy; & because it often changeth the body, they think it ariseth from the body, and what need all this adoe about it? it is cursed cruelty in any to looke upon any labouring under this wound, crying out against them, censuring of them for hypocrites, and in thought sentencing them to hell, blaspheming their God

God and their religion; O you ignorant men learne better and be now inſtructed.

Conſiderations for the pitying of wounded in ſoule.

1. That there is no diſeaſe for ſymptomes and torments like unto this; all other maladies are naturall, but this is ſupernaturall; they come from the conſtitution of the body, this of the ſoule; in them the humours firſt, in this the conſcience firſt, and humours laſt are diſtempered; they may all bee cured by naturall remedies, the body may be brought to a fit temperature; but it is not all the medicines under heaven that are meerely naturall can cure or comfort here.

2. That it is an argument of an unſanctified and ſtony heart within mã to diſregard, taxe, or cenſure men under the miſeries of inward perplexities, you being

ing

ing mercileſſe and wanting tenderneſſe and experience cannot pittie them aright.

3. Bleſſed are ſuch as judge wiſely of ſuch poore ſoules, and do labour to relieve their ſoules in their woundings: this is a worke of mercy indeed, and a buſineſſe becomming the moſt excellent of Chriſtians; Chriſt himſelfe received his annointing, and was ſent of God to bind up the broken hearted, *Eſay* 61.1,2,3. Miniſters have the tongue of the learned given them to ſpeake a word of comfort to ſuch whoſe ſoules are wearie, *Eſa* 50.4. and ſhall not wee that are Chriſtians comfort the feeble minded, and ſupport the weake, 1 *Theſ* 5.14. bearing one anothers burden; O let us pitty ſuch, and pray earneſtly to God for ſuch

Motives to pitie and to relieve woūded Chriſtians.

ſuch, conſidering our owne caſe, *Gal.6.1.* would wee not bee prayed for were wee in their conditions?

Thirdly, how thankfull ſhould all Chriſtians bee for their freedome from this great burden of a wounded ſpirit; tell me, are you ſet at liberty, and is all peace and reſt within? are the bands of the diſtreſſe broken? wouldſt thou bee under the ſame eſtate againe, to feele thoſe hells and ſorrowes which once were endured by thee? No ſurely, than ſtirre up thy heart to bleſſe thy God who hath taken off this heavie burden from thy ſoule; bleſſe him daily and duely; a man can never bee thankfull enough for the eaſe and freedome of his ſpirit; ſome men walke with ſenſeleſſe ſpirits, *Vſe 3.*

and

and they blesse God that they were never troubled in mind all the daies of their life; some men walk with wounds in their spirits, and would give all the world did they enjoy it for freedome and ease, and shall any man enjoy the liberty and peace of his conscience from God and yet walke without joy and praise; it well becommeth men healed of their wounds, out of that ease and liberty they have obtained to bee very joyfull and thankefull.

Vse 4. Fourthly, to learne us in holy feare and care least that wee should bring this heavie and insupportable wound upon our selves: naturally wee shun all pænall evills, and dread the plunging of our selves into distresses; know that wee have said

ſaid enough; it is a burden that none can beare, thinke not out of your ignorance and pride to outface conſcience, or that ever you ſhall be able to ſtand under the burden of its wounds: it will amaze you, and bring you downe; and therefore ſtrive to avoid the pangs and paines of it; and to this purpoſe

Firſt, know that conſcience within, is a moſt tender part which will be ſoone troubled and wounded.

Secondly, know that conſcience troubled is a moſt vexing part; if a man trouble his eye, his eye will trouble him; and ſo it is here, all the vexations will bee unto our ſelves. *Simile.*

Thirdly, know that conſcience under wounds is pining and will languiſh it ſelfe unto death, *Prov.* 12.25.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, consider how apt men are to wound conscience, and they doe it many waies: well then, follow this counsell.

Six rules for the keeping of the wounds of spirit.

1. Make no adventures upon sin; for a man to make light of the least sin, and impudently or improvidently to hazard his soule upon the occasions of sin, is the readie way to wound the spirit: there are too too many who out of a secret confidence of their selfe maintenance doe object their soules upon sinfull companies; they doe as many men that goe out of their houses well and sound, but home they are brought all gored and wounded; in like manner, sinfull occasions have the advantage of us and will soone wound us, let us not proudly presume of our owne strength,

ſtrength, 'tis not the largeneſſe of our judgements, or fullneſſe of our graces, or the peremptorineſſe of our reſolutions that can keepe us (preſuming) from foiles and wounds by ſin; ſuch as make nothing of ſin ſhall ſoone bee wounded and darted by ſin.

2. Seeke not outward pleaſures too much; exceſſe of pleaſures breed exceſſive tremblings and ſadneſſe of ſpirit; ſuch men do pierce themſelves thorough and thorough with many ſorrowes who doe affect a way of worldly delight, and will take their fill of pleaſures; who ſo will have the Bee muſt have his ſting alſo, and if wee will laugh and bee merry beyond meaſure, wee ſhall lie downe and howle for vexation of ſpirit; doe not ſo vainely bathe

bathe your ſelves in carnall delights and worldly recreations; the worldlings paſtime is the deadneſſe and wound of a Chriſtians conſcience.

3. Beware of formality and remiſſeneſſe in holy ſervices: the Ordinances not rightly uſed doe wound exceedingly; how vexing is the word to a formall and carnall Chriſtian? did any man fall of, grow cold, and begin to dead his heart to the meanes and duties, but his heart at the laſt was greatly wounded for it; the neglect of Chriſt by the Church, when his voice did ſeeme unſeaſonable and inopportune unto her, was puniſhed by her ſpirituall wounding, *Cant.* 5.2,3,4,5,6.

4. Nouriſh no hypocriſie or guile within you, doe not colour ſin with faire pretences, and

and plaiſter over a foule heart with an outſide profeſſion, ſerve not graven images when you pretend a ſervice unto God, if you doe ſo, know that it will feſter to a ſore, and make ſuch a wound, which will proove the great diſquietment of your ſoules; Satan would have faſtened this hypocriſie on *Iob*, to have aggravated his miſery; and he well knoweth that hypocriſie is wounding.

5. Goe not on in ſinnefull waies againſt generall or particular convictions; there are who have ſuch abundance of love to ſin in them, that they will be wicked againſt the light of knowledge and the dictate of conſcience, it is not the knowledge they have of evill, nor the riſings up and reproofes of conſcience within them for evills

evills which can hold them of from evill; but on they goe, and wickedly they will doe, now as this prooves an aggravation of sin, so it maketh the wound very deepe; if knowledge and conscience hold us not of from sin, it will hold on sin, peircing the marrow, and vitals of the spirit; *David* went against as great light as any man did, and did not his sins proove wounding sins, breaking his bones and heart? and so will thine too.

6. Keepe your selves in the waies of duty, walking in every action according to the rule, and peace shall be upon your spirits, *Gal.* 6.16. I say the more holy and unblameable a man is, the more strict a man is with himselfe in keeping himselfe under the law of religion, the more

more aſſured peace and ſoundneſſe ſhall he finde within his conſcience; *The waies of wiſedome are waies of pleaſantneſſe, and all her paths are peace, yea and the keeping of ſound wiſedome and diſcretion ſhall be life unto our ſoules, Prov.*3.17,21,22. I aſſure you that duties conſcionably, ſincerely, and conſtantly performed, doe keepe up the ſoule in life and joy.

Fiftly, continue not your ſelves under the wounds of conſcience; there is a ſtrange cruelty which Gods children doe offer unto themſelves, in keeping the wound upon the ſoule alwaies freſh and bleeding; whereby they lie longer under it then they need to doe; I ſhall touch upon the waies and grounds of continuing the wound of conſcience on a mans ſelfe. 1. Want

Vſe 5.

Men doe continue themſelves under their ſpirituall wounds ſix waies

1. Want of ſeaſonable counſell and comfort; when men do hide their wounded eſtate, and will not repaire to appointed comforts and comforters, this doth not onely enlarge the wound, but ſettle it; as wee ſee in bodily wounds, if they want a timely looking too, it is the longer before that they heale; the caſe is ſo here, delaies breed dangers: and we are ſpeedily to make in to our remedies, do not ſleight the leaſt wound as many doe, who at the firſt make nothing of it; but ſet upon the cure as ſoone as you eſpie the wound; the medicine is prepared before hand, and phyſitians to apply it are at hand, onely take you heed of a ſinfull baſhfullneſſe, and dumbe divell, and curſed negligence, cry not out when it is too late.

2. Recourſe

2. Recourſe unto contrary medicines; there are many falſe and deluding medicines unto conſcience; and there are many medicines which are vertuall, but yet not ſutable, all medicines heale not all diſeaſes; wee ſee in experience in bodily wounds which are but ſmall and little to looke to, if that a contrary medicine bee applied to it, it doth enrage it, and increaſe it, and continue it many times unto the death of the patient; and thus if men in and under their ſpirituall wounds will runne to the uſe of ſuch druggs and playſters which may onely for a time damme up the ſenſe, but not make up the wound, they may long and long continue under the wound, and cry out of their wounds; you may no more

Simile. think to heale the ſpirit by ſin, then by adding piles of wood to extinguiſh flaming fire; beleeve me, it was not *Sauls* muſick which could tune his jarring ſpirit, nor *Belſhazzars* cups which could blot out the ſenſe of the ſecret hand-writing; it is not your mad mirth, or joviall companions, or worldly imployments that can take of your ſadneſſe of ſpirit; they may put of from ſome horror for the preſent, but they double horrors in their returne; even as cold water doth the heate in a burning feaver.

3. Illneſſe of diet; diet is much in continuing of bodily wounds; there are meates and drinkes which men muſt abſtaine from, if that they intend to be cured: and 'tis as true in the ſpirituall Surgerie; if that we

wee enlarge our deſires after forbidden fruit, and delight to feed upon ſinfull husks, and will be doing that we ſhould not, we may thanke our ſelves for the ſmart of our wounds; is it the way to be rid of a wound to vexe it? and to feed contrary to it?

4. Selfe-niceneſſe; men are many times ſo tender and indulgent toward themſelves, that they will be healed onely by ſoft words, and the covering of a faire cloth, they will not ſubmit themſelves unto the painefull ſearchings of the Law; but they are in this cruell to themſelves, and out of ſelfe favouring do make their miſery larger and longer.

5. The life of ſenſe; which is open to all winds, and the keeping open of all wounds with-

in the ſoule, my meaning is this; that when Chriſtians do place the diſpoſition of God towards them, and judge of themſelves according to the condition of their own feelings and ſenſible apprehenſions; this is that which doth greatly keepe up the wound of the ſpirit; for now the ſoule being under its ebbings, and finding the channell in a manner drie, ſo as he cannot ſee what he was wont to behold; begins thus to reaſon, ſurely God is not my God in grace and mercy, for I cannot finde him in his love to me as I was wont to doe; which condition is full of ſuſpenſe and feare and doubting, and muſt needs continue the wound.

6. Harkning unto Satan; if a man doe beleeve the divels teſtimony and information touching

ching his eſtate and condition, and take up all his ſpeech upon truſt for truth, he ſhall keepe himſelfe in bleeding wounds, the more Satan doth tamper with our condition, and take upon him to judge of our ſins, and ſervices, and temper and ſtanding, the more ſad and doubtfull will our condition be. I ſay if wee ſhall put the iſſue of our condition upon the determination of Satan, and all his interpretations and deciſions ſhall bee goſpell with us, Lord how ſhall wee bee toſſed too and fro? and where there is no reſt, how can there bee the healing of the wound?

Vſe 6. Quit your ſelves as ſpeedily as you can from the wounded ſpirit; I ſpeake to all ſuch who labour under this wounded ſpirit; 1. Do not you unwiſely

caſt off all hope of cure, and deſpairingly conclude againſt all your comforts; know 1. That the beſt of Gods Saints have beene under the grievouſneſſe of this wound, and that in as fearfull and terrible a manner as any of you can poſſibly bee, and they have received their cures: 2. That the greateſt of our ſpirituall wounds (ſuppoſe them to bee more ſetled and permanent wounds) are capable of cure, and may bee cured, God which hath healed this wound in many of his deare children, and is the wiſe and able Phyſitian for his people, can and will heale all the wounds of our ſpirits, and it matters not how great and grievous the wound bee, if God be Surgeon, *Ier.* 17. 14. *Hoſea* 6. 1. he can heale one as

Three meanes to get out of our wounded eſtate

as well as another, and all wounds aſſoone as any, and therefore ſay not my ſpirit is greatly wounded; but riſe up to the cure, and learne in the next place

2. To be willing of cure; I know that there can be no pleaſure in ſtaying under wounds unto any wiſe man; yet as many are ignorant of the true remedies, ſo many are very unwilling to uſe thoſe remedies provided and preſcribed for their cure; wee finde in ſome people ſuch refuſals of offered comforts; ſuch ſleightings of able counſels; yea and ſuch ſhunnings of ſoule-ſearchings, that it makes us to feare them, and of many of them we may ſay, wee would have cured *Babell*, but ſhe would not be cured, *Ier.* 51. 9. and reſt not heere but

There are five things to be done if wee doe intend the curing of our wounded spirits 1 Open the wound

Thirdly, learne to follow the waies and meanes prescribed for your healing; there is balme in *Gilead*, and a poole at *Bethesda*, and Physitians enough among us, onely wee must take the course, and addresse our selves

1. Unto the opening and searching of the wound; it is not enough that we have a view of our wound in generall, seeing that we are sicke and aile ill, but we must finde out the particular maladie in the speciall reason of it; and therefore you must suffer the Ministers of God to goe to the quick, and to launce and lay open all; there is a holy incision to be made into the wound of the spirit by Gods Law, this doth finde out and open the particular hidden and malevolent humour of the

the ſoule, and it is your duty to let the Law into your hearts, that ſo it may have its perfect worke, bleſſe God for a ſearching Miniſterie, and deliver up your ſelves to that word which maketh moſt inquiſition into your wound; the word that doth moſt wound you for the preſent, it will by Gods bleſſing be a meanes of the after curing of you.

2. Wash the wound

2. Unto the waſhing and cleanſing of the wound; there is a great deale of filth that falls into mans ſpirit, in the wounding thereof, which of neceſſity muſt be waſhed away, or no cure will follow; who ſo is not willing to be rid of ſin (that as extreame filthineſſe doth lodge within him) hee ſhall never receive the right cure of his ſpirituall wound;

it is ſin which is the core of the ulcer; O remoove it in the guilt of it, and remoove it in the filth of it; get the waſhing of Juſtification, and of Sanctification into thy ſoule, and doubt not but thou ſhalt be cured.

3. Apply the playſter.

3. Unto the laying on of the all-healing plaiſter upon the wound; it is the plaiſter in application that is healing; Chriſts blood was ſhed to heale broken ſpirits, *Eſay* 61. 1,2,3. & 53.6. *He is that Sun of righteouſneſſe that hath healing under his wings*, *Mal.* 4.2. that blood alone can aſſwage all our ragings, and heale all our woundings; Now then, make a ſeaſonable application of that blood to your wounded ſoules, ſprinkle with his blood your wounded ſpirits; God alone is pacifed

pacified, if the blood of Christ be sprinkled, and conscience doth heale when God is reconciled; O that we would set our selves by faith into the dying and bleedings of Christ; a man must earnestly labour to beleeve that Christ doth and will satisfie for those sinnes which breed the terror within; and this will proove the curing and the comforting of his heart, as we may see, *Act.* 16.31.

4. Unto the daily openings and dressings of the wound; it is a necessary thing for the soule to be venting it selfe into full and frequent confessions of sin; there is a need of letting out the filthy matter that the wound in healing gathereth; this wee hold; keepe in sin, and you keepe on your trouble; but let

4. Dresse it daily.

Note.

ſet out the filthy matter and eaſe will follow; it is an eaſing thing to bee much in acknowledgement of ſin to God, and to accuſe a mans ſelfe of ſin before God; we ſee *David* found it ſpecially curing unto him, *Pſal.* 32.3,5. and beſides this, there muſt be the renewing of our repentance and godly ſorrow for ſins committed; ſinfull wounds are deepe wounds, and great ſins call for great ſorrowes; *David* was wholy in teares, and *Peter* weepes bitterly; and wee muſt be conſtant in repenting, if wee expect a compleate and comfortable cure; and laſtly we muſt lay open all our ſores before the Lord in prayer; *Davids ſore ran and ceaſed not, and yet in the day of his trouble he ſought the Lord, and he prayed when his ſpirit was full of anguiſh,*

guiſh, Pſal. 77.2,3. and thus muſt we doe, wee muſt come unto God with all our ſinnes and ſoares craving healing from him; who will heale us in his owne time, and by his owne meanes, *Hoſea* 6. 1. & 14.4.

5. Unto the upholdments of our ſpirits, under all the dreſſings of its wounds; wee are very apt to faint in the thought of diſtreſſes; but when wee are felt and dreſt, and dealt withall in a moſt healing way, wee are ready to qualme and ſinke, ſo that it doth very much concerne us to have our cordials and reſtoratives neare us, ſuch as are the ſweet and precious promiſes of the Covenant of grace, wee muſt ſet our ſelves under grace, and beleeve that God hath a good opi- 5. Proviſion. *Note.*

opinion of us, and that his love is towards us; wee must set up the saving vertue of Christs blood against the damming power of sinne; wee must eye Gods acceptance of weake endeavours, and passing by of many failings, wee must conclude that a state of love may bee under the sense of much wrath, and that though the paine for the present be much and great, yet it is sanctified, and God will put an end unto it for good unto such as are his in Covenant. This if we could wisely doe, wee should keepe downe the risings of uncomfortable thoughts; and cease so much talking of our paine, and making complaint thereof, and happily attaine to the curing of the wounds of our spirits; the greatest of mercies, and the

the ground of ſingular rejoycing; becauſe the wounds of the ſpirit are ſo intollerable and unſufferable as I have opened unto you.

Eight Cases of conſcience opened for the relievement of wounded ſpirits.

IT now remaineth that I open unto you ſome of the things which are greatly wounding unto mans ſpirit; and yeeld unto you ſuch relievements againſt them, as Caſes of conſcience doe require, a work requiring both experimentall knowledge, and the tongue of the Learned, unto which I acknowledge my ſelfe inſufficient,

ent, yet having found the good proofe of these following directions in the comforting of many soules already, I am the more encouraged to communicate them unto you in a more publique way, and the blessing of the Almighty goe along with them.

CASE. I.

Of the suspension of divine favour.

Case 1. The absence of Gods love in sense is a great trouble.

THe first thing which I shall speake of as greatly wounding and troubling the spirits of Gods children, is the absence of God in the sense, and feeling of his loving kindnesse; all absences of God (suppose them to

to be longer or ſhorter, inward, or outward;) troubles Chriſtians exceedingly, if *Caine* could make it diſtraction unto him when he was caſt out of Gods viſible preſence, *Gen.*4.15,16. If *Mary* weepe becauſe that they had taken away her Lord and ſhe knew not where that they had laid him, *Iohn* 20.13. how much more wounding unto Chriſtians is the ſuſpenſion of divine favour? the ſoule cannot lie under the ſenſe of Gods diſpleaſure and withdrawments of his love without much alteration and affliction. The life of a Chriſtian is much after the life of ſome great Favourite in the Court, whoſe comforts or diſcomforts depends upon the countenance, or diſcountenance of his Prince; or as it is with the Marigold, which

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which opens and shuts with the Sun; just thus all the while the love of God shines upon a Christian, so as he is able to apprehend it, he lives, and is very chearefull in spirit; the sense of divine love is a spring of joy, a well of consolation, and the admirable refreshment of the soule; [a] *thy favour is life*, [b] *thy loving kindnesse is better then life*, saith *David*, this was it that gave unto him exceeding joy of heart, *Psal.*4.6,7. The Church sate under the shadow of Christ with great delight, and his fruit was sweet unto her taste, *Cant.*2.3. The enjoyment of this love is the day and joy of a Christian. But now if that there bee a withdrawment or clouding or restraining of the love of God unto sense; let God (I say) but hide his face, and

[a] Psal. 30 5.
[b] Psal. 63: 3.

and ſeeme to forget and forſake his; let him but cover himſelfe with a cloud, and abſent himſelfe for a time, covering his with his wrath and juſt diſpleaſure, now 'tis all night and darkeneſſe, yea and death it ſelfe unto Chriſtians; as you may ſee in theſe Scriptures of experience, *Pſal.*30.7. 88.14. 44.24. 77.3, 7,8,9. 13.1. 31. 22. *Lam.* 3.18. *&* 42,43,44. *Eſa.*45.15. 49.14. *Ionah* 2.4. And all this is by reaſon of that conjunction and relation that is betweene God and them, and the wonderfull ſweetneſſe and joy wherewithall they were filled and refreſhed in the daies of their apprehenſion of divine love; things in conjunction are difficult in their ſeparation; a loving wife cannot long endure the abſence of her kind *Reaſon.*

Simile. kind husband; but his departure from her in displeasure is intollerable and insufferable by her; a naturall and ingenious childe makes all his fathers withdrawments bitter unto him, even an *Absolom* that had no goodnesse in him, was troubled with his fathers withholding the wonted signes of his favour in banishing him from his presence, and can wee imagine but that when God turnes his backe, departs in displeasure, keepes himselfe darkened and unseene (that not so much as the least comfortable view of his countenance can bee espied) changeth the set of his countenance, and folds up all the former intimations of love and favour from the sense and apprehension of his children, this is the wounding,

ding, the unſetling and the caſting downe of the ſpirit; I dare affirme, that all outward dignities and revennues which God doth caſt upon Chriſtians in variety and plenty, in this condition will nothing availe to comfort them, divine ſuſpenſions are divine deſertions, and when God is diſpleaſed with a man, which of all the creatures can comfort him? the Moone looſeth her light when the face of the Sun is intercepted; and God taking away his love, the light of comfort is taken away alſo, and Chriſtians are left unto themſelves in woe and miſery: let me tell you:

The greatneſſe of this trouble.

Simile.

Cauſes of the trouble three.

1. That times of ſuſpenſion are times of ſtirring tentations; God is no ſooner abſent, but Satan is preſent and combating

bating with Christians; if God withdraw from *Iob*, the Divell will set on with eagernesse.

2. That times of suspensions are times of greatest suspitions, now feares and jealousies and doubtings doe arise within men.

3. That under all the withdrawments of Gods favour, there is eminent disquietnesse and enlargednesse of sorrowes; the * very bowels of the Church was troubled for the absence of Christ, *Cant.*5.4. and the absence of a God, the fountaine of all good, goeth to the heart of a Christian, for now the light and comfort of heaven is wanting.

* *Visceribus fremexibus.*

This is the miserable condition of Gods children under the suspension of divine favour; But you will aske mee what relievement

lie vement may bee affoorded to Chriſtians whoſe ſpirits are under this trouble?

Relecvements to ſoules under the ſuſpention of Gods love

Unto ſuch men I ſhall propoſe theſe foure directions.

I.

Firſt deepely to judge themſelves for the looſing or ſuſpending cauſes of divine favour; the love of God unto his in himſelf is unchangeable; if there be any change of it unto us, wee may thanke our ſelves for it; there is an occaſion given from man to God, or God would never withdraw his love from man, ſetting him wholly under his wrath and anger; God by way of puniſhment of former unthankfullneſſe, unchearefullneſſe, unprofitableneſſe, and undutifullneſſe doth withdraw himſelfe from his owne deare children; their ſinnes are the cloudes which hide his face,

folding up the bleſſed light of his countenance; theſe ſhut the doore, draw the curtaines, cauſe the ecclipſe, and make the wall of ſeparation betweene God and his; men in ſinning forſake God, and God for ſinne doth forſake men, leaving them to themſelves forſaken of all comforts, and feeling miſerable wrath; wee ſee how *Davids* great ſins did ſuſpend the comfortable preſence of God for a time from his ſoule, *Pſal.*51.11, 12. and the Church acknowledgeth; *Thou haſt hid thy face from us, and conſumed us, becauſe of our iniquities, Eſa.*64.7. and the Prophet tells us, *Your iniquities have ſeparated betweene you and your God, and your ſinnes have made him hide his face from you, Eſa.*59.2. Though God takes not away his favour totally

totally and finally, though hee doth not caſt away his utterly, damning them eternally; yet the ſins of his are ſet before him, even their ſecret ſins in the *light of his countenance*, *Pſal.* 90. 8. for which ſinnes of theirs it doth become them ſeriouſly and ſoundly to judge themſelves, you muſt therefore learne to bewaile the loſſe of divine favour more in the cauſe of it, then miſery by it; when *Iſrael* heard that God would not go up in the midſt of them, *they mourned and no man did put on his ornaments*; and ſurely an humble ſubmiſſion of our ſelves to God, in the confeſſion of our provoking and diſpleaſing ſins, and the taking home unto our ſelves the juſt deſert of condemnation, together with the crying downe the wrath of

Note.

Exod. 33. 3, 4.

God; and seeking the face of God by prayer doth well become all Christians who desire to enjoy the loving favour and the blessed countenance of God; what Father will shew his cheerefull countenance to an unhumbled son for former rebellions? and shall we think to see love and light in Gods face, till God see dejection in our countenances, and griefe in our hearts for our sinnes? O then let us be humbled, For

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Christians are chiefly to bee humbled for three things.

1. Our former dis-esteemes of former feelings of divine love, for that wee did no more prize, and for that we did so carelessly undervalue, and but in an ordinary manner entertaine the pledges and testimonies of Gods speciall love unto us.

2. Our

2. Our former uncomfortableneſſe of ſpirit in and under the feelings of Gods love vouchſafed to us Chriſtians; wee did walk with too much ſadneſſe of ſpirit under many teſtimonies of Gods love unto us, (a thing very diſpleaſing unto God) and for which God doth greatly humble thoſe that are his; they who will not walke chearefully under the ſhining of Gods love upon them, ſhall have it withdrawne from them unto their deepe ſorrow.

3. Our unſtedfaſtneſſe and remiſſeneſſe in holy walking, we have beene too remiſſe in the Ordi-

nances and duties, wee have beene cold and careleſſe in prayer, and hearing, &c. and this God cannot abide, for this wee muſt bee humbled before the Lord, if ever wee expect the light of his countenance.

2. Secondly, prejudice not your ſelves unto a ſtate of divine love, make it not a thing impoſſible to you to recover and regaine Gods face and favour; Chriſtians in their loſſes are to grieve, and hope; it is not ſafe in the ſuſpenſions of divine favour to caſt off all hope of enjoying the ſame; it was a weakeneſſe in *David* to thinke that God would bee favourable no more; it is one of Satans tricks to preſent God at ſuch times

times in full wrath to the ſoule, and to perſwade man that hee muſt bid farewell unto Gods love, the ſenſe being once loſt it ſhould never come againe into the ſoule. Now if men cloſe with Satan and will not bee brought within the compaſſe of divine love, but are alwaies rearing up arguments of divine wrath within themſelves againſt themſelves, how ſhall they come to ſettle their ſoules in love? Can the waters run cleare if wee will alwaies bee mudding them? if we pleade againſt divine love, how ſhall we apply it? ſhut faſt the windowes, and the light cannot come into the roome; deſpaire of ever enjoying Gods love, and you debarre your ſelves of all comfortable feeling of the ſame; helpe not

Si vile

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Si vale

not the divell againſt our ſelves & our comforts; but know that though God be not eaſily gained in his love once loſt, yet the ſenſe of Gods love after the ſenſe of much wrath is attaineable, it being both tendred in the promiſe, and that which many faithfull Chriſtians ſeeking have obtained; reade what is written, *for a ſmall moment have I forſaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee: In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlaſting kindneſſe will I have mercy on thee, ſaith the Lord thy Redeemer.*

Eſay 54. 7, 8.

3. Thirdly, ſet upon the recovering means of Gods favour unto your ſelves, Gods countenance which is now ſuſpended may be renewed; the Sun is not alwaies clouded, and God will not

Simile.

not alwaies bee offended; though God bee not changeable in himſelfe and love, yet ſenſe of his love is with much variation to the ſame Chriſtians; ſometimes they have much light and evidence, and can and doe apply it with great ſtrength and comfort, enjoying as it were their heaven on earth; anon their apprehenſions are clouded, and applications weakned, ſo that great love doth run with little ſenſe, they are ſonnes yet under ſenſe of wrath, and yet they may riſe up againe, and their God ariſe in the light of his countenance upon them; aſſuredly Chriſtians might walke with more ſenſe of Gods love if that they did practiſe theſe foure things.

Senſe of love is graduall.

4. Thing to bee done for the regaining of Gods love in ſenſe.

1. The giving off the waies

of ſinne; a man is no way more an enemy unto his owne aſſurance of divine love, then in and by the continuing in the love and practiſe of any one knowne luſt which is the great diſpleaſure of God; God (I grant) doth love where ſinne is, but he doth neither love ſinne nor will he ſhew himſelfe loving to that man that is a lover of ſin; if the heart gather iniquity to it ſelfe, how can the love of God dwell there? what is it that makes Gods children in the daies of diſtreſſe moſt doubtfull of Gods love, and moſt to queſtion the ſame towards them? is it not the ſins that they have committed? and can we bee in the waies of aſſurance when wee live in the waies of wickedneſſe? all adventuring upon ſins doth beget divine hatred,

Danger by ſinning.

make

make faith to reele, and breeds nothing but doubts, and feares, and jealouſies; all which keeps off the feeling of divine love; O reſolve to give of all ſinne, no way engage your hearts unto it, and you ſhall finde upon your turning from ſinne, the turning of Gods face towards you; 2 *Chron.*7.14. *Eſay* 55.7.

2. Be found in the waies of duty; inlarge the uprightneſſe of your ſoules, the humility of your minds, and ſtrive to all conſcionableneſſe, fervencie and ſtedfaſtneſſe of ſpirit in all required ſervices, and you ſhall finde divine favour bowing and bending towards you; a man is never more in the way of love, then when hee goes right on in the courſe of godlineſſe, when a mans life is wrought unto Gods will and ſpent in Gods work;

worke; there cannot want particular discoveries of Gods love more or lesse; if we live to God and with God, acting and mooving on in a course of holinesse, though for the present all seeme to be clouded and darkned, love will breake out; Note with me three things,

Three things about love and duty.

1. That a Christian wanting assurance of divine love, dares not to decline duty and the services of a spirituall life; though hee cannot as yet feele God in love, yet hee will waite upon God in duty.
2. That the sense and assurance of Gods love in the heart, doth much enlarge the heart in the chearefull and powerfull performance of ho-

ly

ly duties; no man is more ſpiritfull or painefull, then he which day by day feeleth Gods goodneſſe; this is as the oyling to the wheeles, and the light unto working.

3. That while men goe on in a courſe of holy obedience, and moove on in duties out of love to God, God will not faile at length to give them ſome intimations of his love, *Thou meeteſt him that rejoyceth and worketh righteouſneſſe, thoſe that remember thee in thy waies, Eſay 64. 5.*

3. Preſerve your ſelves under the Ordinances, you are in the waies of love when you are in Gods preſence, hearing Gods

Gods voice, and partaking of his Sacraments; theſe reveale the Fathers face unto you, here you ſhall have tenders of divine love unto you; and by theſe God will convey the ſenſe of his love unto you; *I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou haſt loved me may be in them*; where wee plainely ſee that God by the meanes of ſalvation doth perſwade and ſettle the heart in the aſſurance of his love; let it then be your wiſedomes to attend, ſetting your ſelves under the manifeſtation of love, and God in time will ſpeake peace to your hearts, and let you to know the love that hee hath towards you, waite I ſay upon God in his Ordinances, and ſurely the good houre will come

Joh. 17. 26.

come that the heate and comfort of Gods love ſhall bee apprehended by you: *I will heare what the Lord will ſpeake, for hee will ſpeake peace unto his people and to his Saints,* Pſal. 85. 8.

4. Cleare the warrants and grounds of faith; this is moſt true, that faith lives in love, and in the promiſes of love, and there can be no ſound perſwaſion of Gods love in the ſoule without faith; as the Goſpell ſheweth love, and God beſtoweth love, ſo faith receiveth and applieth love; [a] *Wee have knowne and beleeved the love that God hath to us,* now faith doth never worke ſo clearely and apprehenſively in divine love, as when its warrants and grounds (which are the promiſes of God) are very cleare unto

[a] 1 Ioh 4 16.

unto the ſoule; there are two things which keepe men off from the comfortable apprehenſion of divine favour.

Two things keeping men of the apprehenſion of divine love 1. Miſplacing of warrants.

1. One is the miſplacing of warrants, when men are miſtaken in the matter of Gods love, and will judge themſelves to be under divine love upon generall teſtimonies, & by forraigne pawnes, even ſuch as hypocrites or caſt-awaies may have, forgetting that ſaying of *Salomon, No man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before them, Eccleſ. 9. 2.* Suppoſe a man to have concurrence of naturall parts, common graces, morrall moderation, formality of religion, and plenty of all outward things,

things, now if he hereupon fancie a love of God unto him (as too too many doe) the man miſtakes himſelfe and cannot be ſetled in Gods love to him.

2. Another is the darkening and mudding of warrants, when faith is kept from the cleare apprehenſion of promiſes, and cannot ſee all its priviledges, when men will caſt miſts of miſ-interpretation and jealouſie upon the promiſes, queſtioning their goodneſſe or truth, either in themſelves orto themſelves; now love cannot be ſo felt and apprehended as it might be; let it be your work therfore to

2. Darkening of warrants.

to reade over the promiſes of God to faith, and make them as plaine and cleare to faith as you can, conſider well how many grants of favour are made over to faith, and enlarge faith in theſe promiſes, and then ſhall you finde and feele much love in your ſoules.

4. Wiſely ſupport your ſoules and uphold your ſelves by theſe enſuing conſiderations:

4.

8. Things for the ſetling the ſoule in the abſence of divine love.

1. That it is no new or ſtrange thing for Gods deareſt children in their ſenſe to be forſaken of divine love, and to have apprehenſions of divine wrath towards them; the light of Gods love was withdrawne for a time from Chriſt the Sonne

Sonne of Gods onely love, and from his Church, *Pſal.* 44. *Lam.* 3.

2. That God doth never withdraw the ſenſe of his love from any of his children but for ſome ſpeciall cauſes and profitable ends; ſuch as are,

1. The triall of their diſpoſition and temper towards himſelfe; it is an excellent ſpirit that can love God frowning, and depend upon God abſenting and withdrawing himſelfe; *I will wait upon the Lord that hides his face from the houſe of Iacob, and I will looke for him*, *Eſay* 8.17.

2. The ranſacking of their ſoules, now they goe to ſeeke and finde out all the idols of indignation

Cauſes of Gods ſuſpending his love from his

tion that are remaining within them; a little of Gods anger felt and apprehended doth much afflict the heart with sorrow for sinne, and eate out the love of sinne within, a man doth never apprehend and feele his sinnes with more griefe and hatred then in the times of Gods absences, as 1 *Sam.* 21.1,2.

3. The putting us into the most excellent life of faith; our disposition is to live too much by sense, and wee would alwaies enjoy God by sight; but for as much as sight is reserved for another world, and there we shall have the full and

and conſtant fruition of Gods love by viſion, God will and doth in this life exerciſe us in the life of faith, making us in the *non*-feeling of love to beleeve love unto us.

4. The ſearching out of their grounds and evidences, to ſee if that there bee any thing of God left within them, by which they may gaine any aſſurance that God doth love them.

5. The preparing of them for greater apprehenſion of his love and favour in time to come; God many times after a little abſence doth ſhew himſelfe more glorious and comfortable in his love to

to the ſoule then ever he did in times paſt; in the little forſakings of God the ſoule is more ſet after God, and more enlarged to receive from God the teſtimonies of his love then ever it was formerly.

Now then if God will doe his children good in and by the withdrawments of his countenance from them, why ſhould they bee ſo dejected as they are under them?

3. That though the love of God be much unto his in every condition, yet ſuch as are Gods ſhall never bee able to know and feele all the love of God to them, or ſo much of Gods love as their deſires lead them unto: in this life we have our taſtes, and wee ſhall never have

have our fill untill we come to heaven, *Epheſ.*3.19.

4. That the condition of love is one thing, and the feeling of love another thing, alwaies love is not felt, Gods love may bee towards us when his looke is not, a tender Father doth many times fold up his love in angry words and harſh actions, and a loving God to a ſinfull Chriſtian may exerciſe his love inſenſibly, ſo as a man may bee in favour when he feeles no favour, he may be that in faith which hee is not in ſenſe.

5. That ſuch who have not preſent ſenſe of love, may yet have a preſent ground for Gods love unto them; Now the ſure ground of Gods love unto us is the promiſe of love; *Thou Lord wilt bleſſe the righteous,*

The promiſe is the ground of love. Pſal. 5. 12.

ous, with favour wilt thou compaſſe him, ſaith *David*; and truth it is that our happineſſe ſtands in this aſſurance, that divine love is in the promiſe; here is our ſtock, and if wee had no more love then what we could hold in ſenſe, all love would ſoone be gone; this therefore muſt be the wiſedome of Chriſtians not to judge of their intereſt unto Gods love by the preſent actuall feelings of it within their ſoules, but by the gratious promiſe of love made over unto them on Gods part; reaſon thus; what though I cannot feele and find Gods favour to bee towards mee? yet why ſhould I bee dejected? hath not God given out a word of truth for love and favour unto mee?

Note.

6. That ſuch Chriſtians who

who have not the preſent ſenſe of Gods love, may have future ſenſe of Gods love; Gods love is never totally nor finally withdrawne from his children; the ſuſpenſions of Gods favour are temporary, and God doth many times reſerve great aſſurance unto after times: *David* in confidence of this ſaith, *The Lord will command his loving kindneſſe in the day time, and in the night his ſong ſhall bee with mee, and my prayer unto the God of my life*, *Pſal.* 42. 8. Thus ſaith the Church, *He will bring mee forth to the light, and I ſhall behold his righteouſneſſe*, *Micah* 7.9. This is the reaſoning of faith; God hath loving kindneſſe and hee can ſhew it, and and will ſhew it, I have found him a very loving God unto my ſoule in times paſt, and why

Simile. should I doubt of future expectations; after a night of darkeneſſe commeth a day of light, and after a ſtorme commeth a calme; the cloud may be remooved and I may enjoy my God as fully and as freely as ever heretofore.

7. 7. That ſenſe of Gods love is graduall; it is neither in all Chriſtians in the ſame meaſure and degree, nor at all times the ſame in the ſame Chriſtians; *Simile.* truth it is that as it is one and the ſame Sun that ſhineth over the whole world, ſo it is one and the ſame love of God for kind that is manifeſted to all Chriſtians, yet ſome have a a more large and greater meaſure, and a larger and greater ſenſe of that love then others, according to the will and wiſedome of God; I ſay it paſſeth

Love one for kinde different in degree.

to

to the ſenſe with much variation, now the leaſt aſſurance of divine love towards us ſhould be a great upholdment of our ſpirits under the want of much ſenſe and feeling of Gods love within us.

Ob. Yea, could I find any pledges of Gods love to mee, then I could be comforted and ſetled, but I feare that God did never love mee?

Sol. Beloved, you ſee how ſcruple begets ſcruple, as wave doth wave; and to give a ſhort anſwer unto this eaſe, there are theſe ſignes of a mans former enjoyment of Gods love?

4. Signes of the former feelings of Gods love

1. Continued temptations about the love of God unto a mans ſelfe in particular; and that not onely in the times of affliction and hower of death, but at ſuch times when a Chri-

ſtian ſets himſelfe to try his owne ſtanding in grace, and to ſettle himſelfe in the aſſurance of Gods love unto him, I ſay the more intereſt any man hath into Gods love, the more ſpite ſhall he have from Satan, and the more feeling any man hath of divine love, the more ſhall ſuch a man bee followed with ſtrong ſuggeſtions, and horrible temptations drawne from divine wrath, ſhall wee imagine that if Satan hearing the proclamation from heaven of Gods love to Chriſt, *Mat.* 3.17. would notwithſtanding ſeaze upon him, and tempt him to doubt of his Sonſhip and Fathers care and love, that now any member of Chriſt in and under the aſſurance of Gods love ſhall be free from his malicious moleſtations and hide-

ous

ous temptations? the divell hates where God loves; and 'tis strange to behold how Gods children doe many times make those things to bee arguments of discouragements which are or need to be none at all; O say they Satan doth molest and tempt me daily and tells me of divine wrath that is towards me? well, suppose he say so? wilt thou beleeve him? was *he not a lyer and a murtherer from the beginning?* is not his name *the accuser of the Brethren before God day and night? Revel.* 12.10. are not all the testimonies of Satan directly or obliquely against the truth of God and comfort of Christians? tell me O Christian, what is it hurtfull or prejudiciall to Satan if God doe hate a man? him whom God indeed doth hate is

Note.

Iob 8 44

the proper ſubject of Satan, and no wiſe Prince will make warre on his own ſubjects: conclude that wert thou not in Gods favour, Satan would let thee alone and not trouble thee in the ſetling, or under thy not feeling of his love unto thee.

2. Miſerableneſſe of ſoule under the want of the apprehenſion of divine love; we now can grieve and grow ſad becauſe wee faile of our once enjoyed feelings, all cloudings and eccliſes in the aſſurance of divine love are terrible to Chriſtians; the hiding of the Sun is diſcomfortable, and the withdrawments of divine love is a cauſe of juſt trouble; men that never felt divine love, make nothing of its abſence; but to have it called back from one that hath found and felt it, it maketh

maketh a ſad and a darke day; it is impoſſible for the ſoule of man to be humblingly and ſorrowfully ſenſible of the want of Gods love, but there hath been ſome former feelings of divine love within his ſoule, *Pſal.*30.5.

3. Riſings of the deſires after the ſenſe and degrees of divine love; if a man hath taſted of Gods love unto him hee ſhall finde ſtirrings and longings in his ſoule after further and greater ſenſe; now ſaith ſuch a one, O that God would ſhine forth in much love unto my ſoule; O that I could ſee his face as the face of a reconciled God unto mee; time was when I enjoyed his love and it was better then wine; O that I could now enjoy it once more, then ſhould my life bee

full of comfort and content unto mee; can true desires rise up after divine love, if it were never formerly apprehended and felt by the soule? assuredly it is, because there are some sparkles of Gods love in the soule that men doe eagerly and sincerely desire the same; *Let him kisse mee with the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better then wine:* the Church had found the love of Christ to bee better then wine, and hereupon shee doth desire him to kisse her.

Cant. 1. 2.

4. Endeavours after the sense of Gods love; they that have once tasted of Gods love in the enjoyment of it, are readie to maintaine and hold it up within them, yea and to keepe it with the losse of all outward sensible comforts; accounting that

Note.

that one day ſpent (though with much conflict of corruption and temptation) in the true taſte and ſenſe of Gods love in Chriſt is farre beyond all the contentments which the world can affoord; and if at any time they are at a loſſe and doe miſſe of their former feelings they give not off their hope and diligence, but doe ſet themſelves into the waies of aſſurance, & will leave no ſtone unrolled to get their former ſenſe of love if it may bee: whence doth this ariſe? is it not from ſome former touch of the ſoule by the love of God? when *Eliahs* mantle was once caſt upon *Eliſha*, hee could not but follow him; and certaine when Gods love hath beene ſeene and felt, a man ſhall follow on to know more and

more the waies of love.

8. 8. When men for the present can find no sense of Gods love within them, they must support themselves upon the foundation, which is this:

The foundation stands in 2. things

1. That all upright and beleeving persons have a loving God, who is the fullnesse and fountaine of love unto them, how ever their feelings and apprehension are of it; say, *Yet God is good to Israel, and beares a loving heart to the upright*; beloved, know that changes in us doe not conclude any change in God, he is a constant and unchangeable God in his love to his, *whom he once loveth hee loveth unto the end.*

Psal. 77. 1.

Joh. 13. 2.

2. That Christians are saved because God loveth them, not because they doe perceive and feele the love that God hath toward

toward them, our feeling makes to comfort, but the being of love unto happineſſe.

CASE. II.

of doubtings ariſing and continuing in the ſoule.

THere are two ſorts of men that are of contrary opinions about the matters of doubtings; the one concludes an unwarranted happineſſe unto themſelves, becauſe they finde within themſelves a freedome from all doubts; they bleſſe God that they never doubted in all their lives; but have gone on alwaies in a ſetled and peaceable way, never ſcrupling or queſtioning their own preſent ſtanding or

Two ſorts of men. 1. Men of no doubtings.

or future happineſſe; a very ſtrange temper from religion; for though doubtings bee not the eſſence of a Chriſtian, yet he cannot be a ſound and ſetled Chriſtian that never doubted; it cannot be but that ſuch who in the ſtate of nature did not feare to ſinne, will when they are brought into the ſtate of grace doubt of themſelves by reaſon of ſinne; would you not wonder at that man who ſhould paſſe over many unknowne countreys, and croſſe many parting paths and waies, and yet ſhould tell you that in all his travells he ſhould never be at a ſtand, or queſtion which was the way that he ſhould take? and it is to me as ſtrange a Chriſtian that can paſſe over ſo many croſſe and unknowne paths unto nature, as are to be gon over and

Simile.

and yet never to bee weather-beaten, or wind-ſhaken, or to be ſo ſimple as to doubt, for certaine this is nothing but preſumption and ſelfe-deceiving; and I would wiſh no man to bleſſe himſelfe in this eſtate.

2. Men of deubtings

The other doubts of his eſtate becauſe of doubtings; it is a maine part of Satans policie to ſtagger Gods children, and to cauſe the riſing up of ſuſpitions within themſelves, doubting whether that they are Chriſtians, in the ſtate of grace by reaſon of the many doubtings that are found within them: O ſay they, we find within our ſelves the ſuſpenſion of our mindes in the determination thereof; our ſoules doe hang betweene two objects, and unto either of them they cannot fixedly incline; wee finde that there

The nature of doubting

there are at one time two distinct and oppoſite waies, and objects and ends propoſed and preſented unto our mindes for choice, as to beleeve and not to beleeve, to be ſaved and not to be ſaved, to doe this and not to doe this, to have heaven and not to have heaven: and now it becomes queſtionable unto us, which of theſe two is eligible, or which of theſe two ſhall befall us; the minde reflects upon both, and lookes upon both, yet one alone muſt be ours in the iſſue; our mindes doe debate exceedingly and beate themſelves about them, whether this or that; this way or that way wee ſhall goe wee know not; there are found within us at the ſame time the aſſentings & diſſentings of our minds; perſwaſions and diſſwaſions

ſions take hold of us, we are like unto the waves of the ſea, that thruſt forth to the ſhore and yet drawing backe againe, or like unto men in ungrounded places, who no ſooner pluck up one leg but the other ſinkes in deeper; many reaſons on either ſide are apprehended and no faſtning can be found; if we looke

Simile.

Doubtings ſeene in two things.

1. Upon things to be beleeved and done, there are within us doubtings of the truth and goodneſſe of the one, or of the lawfullneſſe and unlawfullneſſe of the performance of the other; we ſtill halt betweene two opinions: if wee looke
2. Upon our owne particular courſe and condition;

tion; whether that we are Christians indeed, and be such whose persons are accepted of God, whose waies do please God; who have any part in the Covenant, or just title to the best things, and that when we die wee shall goe to Heaven; here likewise our hearts doe mis-give us and we daily question our owne estates; And could this bee our condition if that we were in a good estate? This I confesse is the trouble of Gods deerest children, whose mindes within them are diversly carried, and cannot come to a rest, whose mindes doe hang in suspence and cannot determine; this condition causeth unto them, 1. Multiplication of

Doubtings in the godly cause 4. things.

of diſputes, ſuch perſons have contrariety of reaſonings within themſelves, reaſon can never be equally ballanced, but remaineth as a paire of ſcales turning this way and that way, ſuch can ſay as much why they ſhould not doe ſuch and ſuch duties as why they ſhould doe them; and they conceive as many and as ſtrong reaſons why that they ſhould be damned as well as ſaved; 2. Interruption of the practicall act of the underſtanding, that it cannot give ſentence either way for a man or againſt a man: ſo that men under doubts remaine under certaine trouble and reſtleſneſſe, but uncertaine quiet and reliefe, and know no more what to reſolve on then he who hath referred himſelfe and his cauſe unto the umperage of him, who will

will not as yet declare himselfe. 3. Uproare in affections; they will be very tumultuous; passions by doubtings are set on a hurley burley and rage exceedingly, now men fret and feare and faint, and even vexe themselves unto death. 4. Alterations and changes, men under doubts are constant in inconstancie, and do never remaine setled unto themselves; they cannot bee long of one mind; but as the weather-cock doth turne with every turning of the wind from point to point, so such men to day shall and will be of a good mind for God and Heaven; but to morrow shifting, and of a new and another mind, thus do they every day vary from themselves: and this being the condition of a doubtfull Christian, I cannot wonder why his doubts

Simile.

doubts ſhould ſo perplexe him? Conſider with mee one thing more; what it is that cauſeth doubtings in the ſoule? and if we prove the ſprings or cauſes to be evill and terrible, no marvaile if that they are ſo troubleſome unto Chriſtians: I open it thus unto you,

Doubtings within Chriſtians ſpring,

Five cauſes of doubtings in Chriſtians.

1. From originall corruption, that ſinning ſinne, and mother of all ſinne in men, which hath in it the ſeed of all ſinne, and therefore doubtings, nature it ſelfe can nothing but doubt, fleſh in the Elect is wavering and weake, even when grace would beleeve and ſettle, innumerable evills have compaſſed mee about, *mine iniquities have taken hold of mee ſo that I am not able to looke up, they are more then the*

the haires of my head, therefore my heart faileth mee, saith *David*, *Psal.*40. 12. in which place you may see plainely what it was that made *Davids* heart to faile him, it was his sinnes, these were the clog unto his spirit, and these were they that did stagger and doubt him.

2. 2. From the darkenesse and ignorance that is within their mindes, withholding not so much the light of nature as the light of the Scripture in generall, and of the promise in particular, without which they are never able to judge aright of things and condition; what determination can there be whilst a man is in darkenesse? he that cannot see what hee is, or where he is, may do things at a Pro.4. 18. venture only, but in all things he is

is uncertaine and doubtfull.

3. From the hurryings and winnowings of Satan, who followeth Gods children with many and various temptations, in times of tempeſt it is no new thing to ſee a ſhip faſtly anchored toſſed too and fro; and when Satan is maliciouſly haunting and vexing a Chriſtian, no marvaile if doubts and irreſolvedneſſe do appeare? 3. *Simile.*

4. From the greatneſſe of dangers into which they are caſt; if *Peter* be ready to ſinke in the ſea he will doubt; *O thou of little faith wherefore didſt thou doubt?* ſaith Chriſt; we ſee how his feares did ſinke him below the waters, and ſurely as a Chriſtians troubles (inward or outward) doe ariſe, ſo doe his doubtings ariſe alſo; the ſhip doth Mat. 14. 31.

Simile. doth not more naturally arise with the flowing in of the waters, then doubts in the soule with the comming in of troubles.

5. 5. From Gods forsaking and deserting of his; when God goeth away with his light, and leaveth his in darknesse, so as they cannot see or apprehend him to bee their God, now they begin to question themselves and their estates exceedingly.

Ten relievemēts against doubtings in the mind. But you will say unto mee, what shall a Christian doe for his setling that is doubtfull in minde? I shall yeeld unto you these helps following.

1. First, know that the estate of no Christian is so absolutely perfect on earth, that at all times and in all things it should yeeld him an absolute certaintie or free-

freedome from al doubts, whilſt there is a divell to tempt, and Chriſtians are weake in judgement and experience, lying in the cradle of godlineſſe, they may be toſſed too and fro & fall to queſtioning of their eſtate; there is no tree ſo ſurely rooted but in blaſting times it may bee ſhaken; *Peter* doubts, and the Diſciples doubt, and the Chriſtians doubt, though they did not deſpaire, *Mat.* 14. 31. 28.17. 2 *Cor.*4.8. a mans eſtate may be good, and his title currant to God, and Chriſt, and Heaven, and yet he may bee irreſolved, and troubled with many doubtings and that for a long time together. *Simile.*

Secondly, that doubtings within the ſoules of Chriſtians doe not argue a totall want of faith, but an imperfection and ſmall 2.

ſmall portion of faith; it is not the abſence of faith, but the littleneſſe of faith in them which is the ground of their doubtings; O thou of little faith, wherefore didſt thou doubt? where we ſee that Chriſt doth impute *Peters* doubting to the littleneſſe of his beleeving; I ſay that when faith is little in compariſon, and little in operation, this is the ground of doubting, for here wants proportionable ſtrength unto ſetling, & here men have too open an eye upon their wants and diſcouragements, but a very dimme eye to ſee their helpes and incouragements; in a word, here is a want of ſtrength to repaire to the meanes of eſtabliſhment, and a marvailous unskillfullneſſe to argue from the promiſes, and to maintaine its owne grounds;

Littlenes of faith a ground of doubting and why?

grounds; thus it is, as the leſſe the fire is the more is the ſmoke; ſo the more imperfect the faith is, the more is and will be the doubtings of Chriſtians, a little heate and great miſts, and a little faith and great doubtings may goe together in Chriſtians. *Simile.* *Simile.*

Thirdly, that faith and doubtings are not oppoſed as life and death, where the preſence of the one determinately concludes the abſence of the other; but looke as cold and heate in remiſſe degrees may bee in one and the ſame ſubject, though the nature of cold be not the nature of heate, ſo though faith be not doubting, nor doubting faith, yet both may and doe meete in the ſame perſon; actuall doubtings may bee where is habituall faith, they are not 3. *Simile.* One and the ſame perſon may beleeve and doubt and how?

answering parts one unto another, for they remaine in contrariety and opposition, nor things that are simultaneous in their acts and operations; doubtings can no more consist at the same time with the acts of faith, then its possible that a man should lay his hand on the rock and not lay his hand on the rock at the same time, or that a mans eye should see and not see the colour at the same time; the soule cannot at the same time set out from the same faculty opposite acts: and it cannot bee that while the soule doth beleeve it should doubt.

4. A caution

Fourthly, that Gods children for the presence of weaknesses & doubtings must not conclude a nullity of grace and faith within themselves, God forbid that we should thinke our field had

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no corne becauſe of many weeds in it, or the heape had no wheate becauſe of much chaffe, or the ſoule no grace becauſe of doubtings. *Simile.*

Fiftly, that the leaſt degree of faith within the ſoule of a man, though accompanied with never ſo many doubtings, doth denominate Chriſtians beleevers with God, *Peters* doubting did not put him out of the ranke of beleevers; Chriſt doth not ſay to him, O thou of doubting, thy faith is little; but hee gives him this title, *O thou of little faith*; God judgeth of his according to their better part, and if hee finde a little grace among many corruptions, hee calls us according unto the grace. 5. Mat. 14. 31.

Sixthly, there muſt bee care taken to diſtinguiſh doubtings

in Christians from doubtings that are found in unregenerate men; most true it is, that the same disease of doubting is incident unto good and bad, it is corruption in both, it being a sinne for any to doubt; yet it is as true, that doubting stands differingly in the godly from the wicked in these respects:

1. In the godly there is doubting against a temper and frame directly opposite unto doubtings; doubtings in them doe hold an opposition against faith and perswasion wrought in the soule; faith in nature and act is opposite to doubting in nature and act; they have two springs or causes in the soule of man; it is impossible that the doubtings of the godly should spring from their spirituall frame

Doubting a nature and an infirmity.

frame and temper; grace doth not begin or cheriſh doubtings in any, it forbids to doubt and commands to beleeve; it grieves at doubting and thirſts after ſetling, ſo that they ſtand as infirmities in the godly, not as a nature; in unregenerate men doubtings are a nature and of their entire conſtitution; doubtings are begotten and bred up in them by a nature that is wholy ſinnefull and doubtfull.

2. In the godly doubtings are ſubdued in their power, by reaſon of converſion and Sanctification, wherein this as well as all other ſinnes receiveth it deaths wounds; the life and trouble of doubts onely remaine in the godly, interrupting them in the great worke of beleeving, for were not faith

Doubting in combate and in conqueſt.

assaulted by the stirrings of doubtings within, it would doe its part most gloriously, but now as a man that hath a maimed leg cannot moove as hee desires, no more can Christians beleeve as they would, by reason of doubtings which doe crosse them; but this is all that doubtings can doe in the godly, they can molest, but never command; their powers are crushed, and faith riseth up victoriously over all at the last; now in wicked men doubtings raigne and have soveraigne authority.

Doubtings 1. Partiall. 2. Entire.

3. In the godly doubtings are partiall; it is of the subject, not of the object, in action, not affection, of evidence, not adherance, of the circumstantialls, not substantialls; it is thus with Christians, that though in many passages

paſſages they cannot bee certainely perſwaded that they are good and right, yet in many other things they are ſetled and reſolved; whereas doubtings in wicked men are totall and entire, 'tis all doubting and that in all things.

4. In the godly doubtings turne unto their profit, God for very good ends doth ſuffer doubtings in his, as 1. To free them from many ſins of pride, preſumption, negligence and the like: 2. To force them to their divine helps, that now they may the more enquire and ſeeke reſolution and ſetling from Heaven. 3. To make them more firme and certaine at the laſt, a tree in ſhaking gets fixedneſſe, a ſcholler by enquiry gets ſatisfaction, and a Chriſtian by his doubtings com-

Ends of doubtings in the godly ſoure.

Simile.

Nil tam certum quàm quod ex dubio certum.

meth to be more resolved; all our doubtings end in resolution: God will give unto his at the last full satisfaction of soule and conscience.

5. In the Elect all doubtings are curable and recoverable, they are possible of cure, and shall actually be cured in Gods time by Gods meanes; the Lord doth mercifully heale his of all the tossings and turnings of their minds, that at length they come to rest upon the mountaine of his truth & goodnesse unto them in Christ; there is an excellent temper toward healing wrought in Gods children; they have a bent unto determination, and will not give up their case as desperate, what though they cannot quit themselves of all uncertainties, and attaine unto positive fixing,

Note.

yet

yet they will with *Noahs* Dove hover over the Arke, which is Chriſt and the Promiſes, the onely and able grounds of ſtedfaſtneſſe and ſetling unto Chriſtians.

The doubtings of wicked men are poſſible of curing, if wee conſider what God by his power can doe; but yet they remaine uncured by the juſtice of God lying upon them, and doe goe on increaſing doubtings unto their owne damnation; ſo that in the one, doubtings are miſerable, but in the other damnable.

Seventhly, beware of maintaining and cheriſhing doubtings within your owne ſoules: it is for Chriſtians to labour after the cure of this diſeaſe of doubting, and to cloſe up this ſpirituall diſtemper within

Motives to cure doubtings are three

their ſoules, conſidering 1. That doubting is an ill quality in the ſoule, that breeds unto much diſcomfort, depriving of all true ſtaiedneſſe and contentment; 2. It is that which is very hinderſome to a progreſſe in Chriſtianity, keeping Chriſtians at a ſtay and ſtanding, and 3. There is nothing which is more injurious to God in his Attributes, who muſt not bee queſtioned in his promiſed Power, Truth, Love and Goodneſſe; and yet wee finde this to bee a common failing in doubting Chriſtians, to cheriſh and nouriſh doubtings within themſelves, yea, and many times to ſtudy and follow the way of doubting; a great and cruell evill moſt gratefull unto Satan, and diſpleaſing to God: my counſell therefore is unto you

Meanes againſt cheriſhing doubts.

1. To

1. To make and maintaine no argument within you againſt the full and gratious promiſes of God; delight not in that childiſh and unreaſonable kinde of diſputation which may hurry the ſoule with feares and doubtings, helping doubts againſt faith; if men will thruſt away the promiſes from themſelves, and ſay, that though there be an abſolute truth and goodneſſe in them, yet their truth and goodneſſe doth not belong unto them, how can the ſoule poſſibly ſettle and be quiet; can the anchor fixe if it want ground, or the bird reſt whilſt its in the aire? no more *Simile.*

more can a Christian resolve and settle if it pleade against the promises.

2. Beleeve no testimonie of Satan concerning your conditions; I know Satan will take upon him to judge of Christians sinnes and services, and temper and state, and as he hath an art to colour over the true condition of sinnefull bondage, so hee hath a deluſion in hiding from the eyes of Christians the true powers of gratious sincerity and safe standing; now if wee looke upon things in the divells glasse, beleeving that all things are in us and with us as hee doth tell us, how

how ſhall wee bee toſſed too and fro, and what can abide us but daily doubtings? for Satan will alwaies bee deciding and determining againſt a Chriſtians comfort and happineſſe, he being their utter enemie; it doth well become us to wave the erroneous judgement of Satan,

The teſtimony of Satan put by two waies.

1. By making our appeales unto God the Juſt and Supreame Judge, to whom immediately and onely the deciſive power doth appertaine, I ſay none but God can decide the triall of a mans eternall eſtate.

2. By

2. By resting in the testimony of Gods Word; wee must learne the skill of beating of Satan by the Word, setting up the judgement of the Word against the judgement of Satan; and if wee can finde from the Word a good estate, let Satan goe and whistle, wee need in nothing bee troubled by him.

3. Be not apt to give way unto needlesse and causelesse feares; this is a great fault in Christians, and very injurious unto setling; you shall seldome finde but that an overfearing nature is

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a doubting nature, and if we will give way unto the creating and multiplying of our feares, wee ſhall feed and nouriſh ſcruples and doubtings exceedingly; conſider it in experience, if that a childe be hurt, or any undeſired newes brought unto us of the ſickneſſe, or calamity of a neare and deare friend, the heart is preſently grieving and fearing, and when feares prevaile and command within, then the minde is full of queſtionings, ſure the wound is mortall, and my friend is dead, or in farre worſe condition then is reported unto mee, and alas what will be

bee the iſſue? the party is extreamely cruciated in his minde, and juſt ſo is it in the caſe in hand, if that men will ſtill feare their eſtate, how can they but ſtill continue under doubtings, and bee as it were at their wits end, not knowing what to doe or what ſhall become of themſelves.

4. Doe not diſregard motions and motives unto ſetledneſſe; there are many who come to Gods Word and Miniſters with their doubtings, and with many teares and bitter complaints they vent themſelves of them, now when the Miniſter hath

hath judicially ſhewed unto them not onely the cauſes but the cures of thoſe their doubtings, and hath given unto them curing comfort and counſell, they ſet up their reaſons againſt all that is ſaid, and conceive the man to be miſtaken in them; or elſe they forget the conſolation, not applying themſelves to the way preſcribed; and ſurely long may ſuch continue under a doubting condition who reject all directions given unto them.

Eighthly, affect not a life of ſenſe; this will expoſe us to infinite doubtings, it is open unto all windes and hath no con- 8.

constant bottome to settle upon; observe the uncertainty of this life of sense in *Thomas*; the man would not beleeve that Christ was risen, *except he should see in his hands the print of the nailes, and thrust his hand into his side*, *Ioh.*20.21. Say now that Christ had for ever withdrawne his bodily presence from *Thomas*, where had beene all those sweet comforts which he might have enjoyed in and by the resurrection of Christ? certainely hee had lost them for ever, if sense must bee his judge and give the sentence; Christ therefore doth shew him his weakenesse and failing, in saying to him, *Thomas, Blessed are they that have not seene and yet have beleeved*, *verse* 29. you that will have all by sight and feeling, or else you

you will never bee quiet, I tell you

1. That ſenſe is not a fit judge of a Chriſtians ſpirituall condition; it cannot at all times ſee into our eſtates, much leſſe report our eſtate unto us, the ſpirituall condition may be without all feeling; eyes may faile, and fleſh faile, and God frowne, and faith onely expreſſe ſuch acts as are pure and hidden, grounding it ſelfe upon the naked promiſe, and how can ſenſe report and give ſentence. Pſal 73. 28.

2. That ſenſe is yea and nay, it maketh our condition to bee good and bad, loſt and found, and that many times in one day nay in one hower, and all becauſe it looketh on the outſide of things, judging according to outward appearance; I yeeld that it is uncomfortable for a man

man to walke without his feeling, but it is as uncertaine to walke alltogether by feeling.

3. That the ſpirituall courſe of Chriſtians doth many times goe againſt all the ſenſe of Chriſtians; ſenſe and the promiſe are many times at a contradiction; the promiſe goeth on when ſenſe cannot perceive it, but behold the contrary; and how can ſenſe meeting with contrarieties reſolve?

4. That ſenſe goes mans way, but faith goes Gods way; ſenſe mooves upon what appeares, and takes Gods deed, whereas faith relyeth upon Gods Word, and pitcheth upon things inviſible; *I will waite upon the Lord that hides his face from the houſe of Iacob, and I will looke for him, Eſa.* 8.17.

8.17. to this purpoſe reade *Eſa.*50.10. *Hab.*3.17,18.

Ninthly, maintaine and ſet up faith; beleeving is the ground of ſetling, *after yee beleeved you were ſealed*, ſaith *Paul*, *Epheſ.*1.13. a man cannot have the fruit before hee hath the tree, nor ſafety before hee hath laid himſelfe on the rock; nor aſſurance before hee beleeveth; looke as the ſoule breeds ſeeing in the eyes, and hearing in the eares, ſo true faith doth breed in the ſoule true ſetledneſſe and aſſurance: if Chriſtians could riſe up to the granting way of faith, their doubts would more and more vaniſh; faith is

9.

Simile.

1. The firſt ground of all a Chriſtians aſſurances and experiences, if any man hath either in his ſoule

soule he obtained them by faith.

2. The prime instrument bringing home the comfort of all divine good unto the soule, the joy of Heaven, merit of Christ, and favour of God cannot actually comfort and quiet mans heart untill that faith hath done its part.

Faith at liberty and in authority doth compose a Christians doubtings, keeping him from sinking under them, two waies;

1. By yeelding a ground for setledness; all the while the soule can finde and feele no bottome, it cannot but doubt and stagger; can the ship but rowle up and downe when the Marriner cannot finde a place to fixe

Simile.

fixe his anchor? but when a man can finde in and by beleeving the truth and goodneſſe of a promiſe to reſt upon, and can ſay as *David, Remember the word unto thy ſervant upon which thou haſt cauſed mee to hope,* now is hee reſolved and become quiet; I beleeved and therefore I ſpake, and what reaſon is there that a man ſhould doubt his ſafety when hee is once fully ſet upon the rocke? Pſal. 119. 49.

2. By overmatching all the cauſes and grounds of doubtings imagined by Chriſtians; Chriſtians doubt many times when as they have little reaſon to doubt; and ſometimes they thinke their reaſons for their doubtings are unanſwerable; but faith prevailing will put the lie and folly upon al that

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can bee ſaid for doubting, it will ſhame and ſilence the fooliſh reaſonings of the hearts of Gods children; you may ſee this in *David*; when his thoughts ranne wild upon the proſperities of wicked men, and the adverſities of Gods children, how did his doubts come in upon him, even to his ſinking, he ſaith, *Verily I have cleanſed my heart in vaine, and waſhed my hands in innocency, for all the day long I have beene plagued:* but how doth he recover himſelfe? Surely it was by the exerciſe and liberty of his faith, he went into the houſe of God, and there his faith found matter and ground to worke upon, and hee became better ſetled in his ſoule, *Pſal.* 73.13,14,15,16,17. and truth it is, that every thing appeares in

in all cauſes of feare, when faith is not the maſter and cannot have full power to bee agent and factor for a Chriſtian; *Beleeve in the Lord your God and you ſhall bee eſtabliſhed*, 2 *Chron.* 20. 20.

Tenthly, ſubdue and keepe downe ſinne in the love and power thereof; *If iniquity bee in thine hand, put it farre away, and let not wickedneſſe dwell in thy tabernacles; for then ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot, yea thou ſhalt bee ſtedfaſt, and ſhalt not feare*, Iob 22. 14, 15. where wee plainely ſee, that the more ſinne doth die in its love and power within the ſoule, the more will doubtings die too; kill ſinne, and faith lives, and doubts vaniſh; The Apoſtle would 10.

Heb. 10. 22.

that men ſhould *draw neere with a true heart in aſſurance of faith*, (i. e.) to caſt away doubtings in their approaches to God, and not to come indifferently, may bee I ſhall bee accepted, may bee I ſhall not, but as verily perſwaded of Gods acceptation; happily ſome Chriſtian might ſay to him, how might a man doe this? (hee anſwereth) *having the heart ſprinkled from an evill conſcience, q.d.* faith cannot well perſwade, nor the heart ſettle till you get quit of ſinne, if your conſciences doe charge and condemne you of evill, you will bee doubtfull, truth it is, that doubtings are cured by Mortification, the heart muſt bee circumciſed of its unbeleeving and hardneſſe and ungodli-

neſſe

lineſſe ere ever wee ſhall get quit of doubtings: if wee reſolve to bee evill, wee muſt reſolve to bee doubtfull, were it not for ſinnefullneſſe faith would bee quicker and ſtronger, and wee more ſetled and ſtaied in our mindes, a heavie rhume falling into the eyes doth hinder a man from looking up; and ſinne entertained in the ſoule reares up contrary reaſonings and denials to faith, making the incouragements of it to bee ſo difficult, that a Chriſtian ſpirit doth faile him, and hee ſhall not beeable to looke up, *Pſal.* 40.12.

CASE. III.

Of perſonall unworthineſſe.

IT hath not a little troubled the minds of many of Gods deare children to conſider what unworthy creatures they are in themſelves, and that they are ſo ill deſerving at Gods hands, having no more goodneſſe in them to commend them to Gods acceptation and love; wee finde them many times complaining, and that with much griefe of heart that they have nothing in them but ſinne and wickedneſſe, and how ſhould God ever accept ſuch as they are to love and life under the preſence of their unworthineſſe?

They

they ſtand in their owne light, Satan hereby taking advantage againſt them; This I finde to bee a maine maſter-peece of Satans cunning: that before a man is convinced of ſinne, hee maketh him ſo full, and rich, and worthy, that hee cares not for the merits of Chriſt, or the mercy of God, he will not beg, but buy a place in heaven; *Laodicea* was rich, and increaſed with goods, and had need of nothing, not knowing that ſhee was *wretched, and miſerable, and poore, and blind, and naked, Rev.*3.17. The *Corinthians* did ſo ſhine in their owne opinions, and were in ſuch ſelfe credit, that they were rich and full raigning as kings; but when a mans eyes are opened to ſee the ſinnefullneſſe of his ſinnes, then hee makes him

very poore, and his unworthineſſe to bee ſuch and ſo great, that it is not for him to thinke of heaven, or mercy, or Chriſt; a great temptation, under which lieth lurking a white divell. To relieve the ſoule in this caſe, I ſhall propound theſe few conſiderations.

1. That if unworthineſſe were a ſufficient ground to keepe men of from divine favour and eternall happineſſe, none of all the ſonnes of men could ever bee ſaved, for all have ſinned, and by ſinne made themſelves unworthy of mercy.

2. That there is no ſubjective worthineſſe antecedently required unto juſtification and ſalvation; God well knew the unworthy condition of *Iſrael* when hee made them his people

peop'e, entering into the Covenant of life and peace with them, *Ezek.*16. can you conceive that there was any inherent worthineſſe in them that did lie weltring in their owne blood? beggars are not worthy of almes, traitors are not worthy of pardons, nor ſinfull men worthy of Chriſt or mercy, *Luke* 15.21. and why ſhould we dreame of having a requiſite worthineſſe of our owne? if man had any thing in him, he were altogether unfit to come in unto the free offer of grace; we ſee the invitation is made to the monie-leſſe and merit-leſſe Chriſtian, *Eſa.*55.1.

2. That though worthineſſe be not in the ſtreame, yet it is in the fountaine; and though there bee no ſubjective worthineſſe in men, yet there is

an objective worthineſſe in Jeſus Chriſt, which is tendred to ſinners by grace, and accepted by faith; there is enough in Chriſt to make our perſons lovely and acceptable to God, without whom, if we had all ſelfe-worthineſſe, wee ſhould remaine in Gods eyes moſt unworthy perſons; *This is my beloved Sonne in whom I am well pleaſed*, ſaith the Father, *Mat.* 3.17.

Aſſurances for acceptance under unworthines

4. That notwithſtanding mans owne great unworthineſſe, there is enough to aſſure him of divine acceptance; for

Firſt, Mercy in God is full and free, it hath enough in it ſelfe to incline it ſelfe to gratious pardons, and favourable acceptances; God doth blot out tranſgreſſions, not for

mans

mans sake, but for his owne sake, *Esa.*43.25.

Secondly, mans chiefest selfe-worthinesse is to see his owne unworthinesse, and to be humbled for it; certainely, such as have base & low esteemes of themselves, and can dwell upon the guilt and merit of their owne sinnefullnesse, judging themselves to hell for it; such as can (with *Paul*) disclaime from all worth in themselves, and doe see in all their parts, and gifts, and performances an inability to engeatiate them with God; such as can in the best of conditions, and after the best of performances, bewaile their weake expressions of duty, acknowledging themselves to be most unprofitable servants, needing the mercy of a God and the merit of Christ;

Esa.64.6 Luk.15. 21.

Phil.3.7.

Luk 17. 10.

theſe I ſay are men of the greateſt worthineſſe with God; according to the old truth, hee paies beſt for Heaven that ſeeth hee hath nothing at all to pay for Heaven.

Thirdly, an unworthy ſinner may plead out the Covenant of grace with God, and the freeneſſe of the tenders of his mercy; I know no man that can or doth more admire and magnifie divine mercy, then a ſinner truly ſenſible of his owne unworthineſſe; I know none more deſirous of mercy then ſuch; I know none will be more ready to accept of Heaven and favour out of freeneſſe of grace then ſuch; I know none to whom the offer of ſalvation purchaſed by Chriſt is made but ſuch; and what now doth hinder them from comming in

unto

unto God, pleading with him after this or the like manner. Gratious Lord, I am here before thee for mercy, and for thy Chriſt, I ſee in my ſelfe nothing worthy thee or thy Chriſt; for I am wholy ſinnefull; if thou now wilt receive mee for thine owne, and pardon mee my ſinnes out of thine owne free grace, and for the merit of thine onely Sonne alone, thou ſhalt ſhew thy ſelfe a gratious God indeed; O Lord that which draweth mee in unto thee for grace, is thine owne free grace; thou gaveſt mee the word and hope of comfort, and therefore I durſt not ſtand out; Lord, loe heere I am before thee, without all confidence in my ſelfe; O let it be unto mee according to the freeneſſe and richneſſe of thy

mercy,

mercy, refuse mee not though I am unworthy to be called thy sonne.

5. That too much standing on selfe-unworthinesse, is many times an argument of secret pride, and opinion of merit; men would faine bee some body with God, and doe something for Heaven; Lord how willing is man to have a finger in his owne salvation, and to be at the least a co-adjutor with Christ in the office of his Redemption; when as in truth it is mercy alone that must doe all, and such are most in the way of comfort that referre their spirituall condition unto mercy, setting up and advancing the free favour of God as the onely cause of their spirituall estate, 1 *Cor.* 15. 10. tell mee sadly and seriously thou troubled

bled ſoule, if thou hadſt more goodneſſe in thee, if thy graces were more perfect in thee, and thy ſervices had beene or could bee better performed by thee, then thy hopes and aſſurances could and would riſe within thee, then thou couldeſt have confidence and ſettlement within thee? yes, and what is this I pray thee, but the ſpice of pride and ſecret dependance on merit? what wilt thou looke upon thy ſelfe, and within thy ſelfe, and draw out principles of ſalvation from thy ſelfe? how art thou onely beholding to grace and to Chriſt for thy ſalvation when thou thus ſoreſt and prieſt into thy ſelfe? if thou wilt be a cauſe of thine owne good, thou muſt bee a ground of thine owne glory, and if thou wilt bring thy penny,

ny, thou wilt make thy ſelfe joynt purchaſer with Chriſt; tell mee O Chriſtian, hadſt thou all thy deſired qualifications, would they or can they equall the favour of God? and durſt thou to ſtand upon this ſo as to build thy eternall welfare on it? bee perſwaded out of this vaine and empty conceit of thine, and ceaſe further to perplexe thy ſoule under the thoughts of thine unworthineſſe, God indeed lookes not out of himſelfe in the acts of his mercy, but man muſt looke wholy upon God, and no way upon himſelfe if hee intend to bee ſaved and enjoy mercy.

CASE.

CASE. IIII.

Of imperfection and littleneſſe of faith and other graces.

SUch as are men of grace in truth, would bee men of grace in perfection, no preſent meaſures can content ſuch; a ſweet and bleſſed temper, and if it were rightly regulated, it would worke to Chriſtians much comfort, and free their mindes of much trouble; but thus it commeth to paſſe, that Chriſtans doe much trouble their mindes with the degrees and meaſures, operations and actions of their graces received; they either comparing themſelves with others intereſſed in the ſame graces with them-

Littleneſs of grace apprehended.

themſelves, and obſerving that others doe excell them by farre, ſo as no compariſon can be made betweene them; or els they looking into themſelves doe finde their graces beſet with many corruptions, that they can diſcerne much more ſinne in them then grace, that it is in a manner all naught within them; in a word, they finding the pulſe of grace beating ſlowly within; their faith and patience unactive and in a manner idle within them; This I ſay gives them occaſion to queſtion their condition, now ſurely they are not right and ſound, for that they are more imperfect in their graces then others, they goe not forward and increaſe in their graces as others doe; O the eye of their faith is dimme, and doth but darkly

darkely apprehend the promiſes of God, they doe many times diſcerne the promiſes with miſtakings; fullneſſe and ſetledneſſe of apprehenſion is wanting in them; they cannot come off their carnall reaſonings and ſelfe diſputations, yeelding firmeneſſe and entireneſſe of aſſent unto the truth of Gods promiſes as they ought to doe, their mindes are not yet ſo ſetled, that all is yea and Amen that is ſpoken by God in the promiſes unto them; they often ſay within themſelves, hath God indeed ſaid this and this? and may a man rely upon the word of his promiſe? they cannot caſt anchor ſo as it ſhall faſten; they ſee the ſhore but cannot reach it, and they ſee Chriſt and the promiſes, but cannot apply them, there is an interrupti-

on

on and ſuſpenſion of the acts of application; as for the perſwaſions of faith in them, they are ſmall or none at all, they cannot ſay that God is their God, and Chriſt their Chriſt, and this they make to be their death and burden, under which eſtate wee ſhall ſhew you that Chriſtians have not ſo much cauſe of creating perplexities to themſelves as many times they doe; conſider with mee,

Ten releevements to the ſoule under imperfection of grace.

1. That a little grace is better then no grace; it is the want of grace that is damnable, and may cauſe a man to cloſe up againſt himſelfe all aſſurance and ſettlement; tell mee O Chriſtian, wouldſt thou change thy poore condition in grace for the greateſt graceleſſe condition in the world? wilt thou part from that grace thou haſt for

for any or all the ſeeming pleaſures of ſinne? I dare ſay thou wouldſt not, then bee quieted in thy minde, and doe not fooliſhly argue the nullity of a gratious condition from the imperfection of thy graces.

2. That a little grace requireth a great deale of thankes, it comming from the God of all grace and being an argument of ſound ſanctification; ſhall I ſay that it is not the way of thankfullneſſe to make little of any divine mercie; we are too little for the leaſt meaſure by reaſon of our unworthineſſe; and we doe not well to undervalew the leaſt proportion and gift of grace.

3. That which one man makes little unto himſelfe, would bee a great deale with many other Chriſtians; wee finde

finde in experience, that the rich mans complaint would be the poore mans content; many poore soules could well feast themselves with the fragments that come from their tables, whenas they doe foolishly and proudly complain of want; just so it is with many Christians, they tell us that grace is weake and small in them, when other Christians reasoning with them, and hearing them complaine, doe blesse God for their estate in grace, and would bee exceeding glad were they in their condition of grace.

4. That men of no grace are never troubled and truly humbled about smallnesse and weakenesse of grace, the eyes of such are not yet opened to see their spirituall wants.

5. That little grace is an argument

gument of grace in the ſoule; a little man is a man, and a little faith is faith; grace in truth hath a being in weakeneſſe it ſelfe, and though it bee in the loweſt meaſures, there the ſoule hath an intereſt in God, in Chriſt, in the promiſes and in heaven, little faith can and doth lay hold of great things, and prooves unto Chriſtians a great aſſurance.

6. Little grace is a creature of God which he will not deſpiſe or forſake; *Doth God deſpiſe the day of ſmall things?* will any tender mother caſt off her babe becauſe it is weake? and ſhall we imagine that God will not accept according to that a man hath, bee it never ſo little? Chriſtians be perſwaded that grace in truth though never ſo ſmall is for acceptance. Zach 4. 10.

7. Little

7. Little grace will doe much, it many times doth that in and for Christians under weakenesse that all the world cannot doe for them, it is their light in darkenesse, their life in death, and their upholdment from sinking; the widdowes little oile and little meale went a great way, God blessing it; and thus it is with little grace, it will carry a man thorough the whole world and doe mighty things for him; the great advantages of a little grace is unspeakable.

8. That grace in weakenesse is made for strength, and grace in littlenesse is fitted for increase, our graces passe from imperfection to perfection, and from weakenesse unto strength; Gods strength being made perfect in mans weakenesse; weak-

2 Cor. 12. 9.

nesse

neſſe doth both call in and ſet out the glory of divine aſſiſtance: conſider, that he who hath moſt grace hath not all he ſhould have, and hee who hath leaſt in grace hath not all that he would have, both meaſures are riſing up unto greater perfections; little grace is in a ſtate of growth, and in and by the uſe of meanes it is enlarged, as we may ſee in *Nicodemus* and all new borne Chriſtians, whoſe growth is much in parts and powers of their graces: they have riſen from ſmall beginnings to moſt admirable perfections.

9. That gifts of Sanctification and appertaining unto mens ſalvation are different and unequall, grace is alike in nature, but not alike in meaſure in all; the different ſtandings of

of Christians in Christianity and grace, is set out unto us both in the comparisons and appellations of them in Scripture; they are compared to branches, starres, sheepe, and the members of the body; we reade of men, and babes, fathers, and children; all men be not of one stature, nor all trees of one growth, nor all Christians of equall grace; to some is given a greater, to others a lesser measure of grace; grace in one is much and strong, in another little and weake, sincere in both, but absolutely perfect in none; Note with mee two things.

Graces are two wayes considerable. 1 *Qualis esse & habitus*

1. That all degrees of Christians doe agree together in the substantiall part of grace, every man hath the same spirit of ho-

holineſſe, knowledge, faith, repentance, love, *&c.* is alike in them all, flowing from one and the ſame common fountaine.

2. That the varying of Chriſtians is much in the active part of grace, they may have their ſeverall agilities, ſo as one man may know more then another, one man may pray more fervently and frequently then another, and ſo is it in the reſt of all required duties; mee thinkes that it is with Chriſtians in this caſe as it is with men in nature; every man hath a ſoule, and faculties from that ſoule, and actions iſſuing out of those

2. Quoad operari & exercitium.

Simile.

thoſe faculties, yet every man is not equall in the expreſſive waies of nature.

A queſtion about the cauſes of inequality of meaſures and operations of graces in Chriſtians

But you will querie, whence doth this inequality of graces and holy operations ariſe?

I anſwer, not from nullity and falſeneſſe of grace, as weake Chriſtians do ſurmiſe; but

1. From the wiſe diſpenſation of God, who giveth grace to every man according to his owne good will and pleaſure, and followeth his owne meaſures with the ſame proportion of aſſiſtance.

2. From the variety of particular occaſions; every Chriſtian hath not alike forcible occaſion to exerciſe his graces given him.

3. From the variety of particular ends; God intends ſome Chri-

Chriſtians for ſome ſingular end and ſervices to which hee fits them by the great improovement and uſe of their graces.

4. From the variety of particular aſſiſtance; every man hath not at all times an equall gale or breath of the Spirit to enlighten, affect, excite, and draw them onward.

5. From the variation of naturall tempers; bodily conſtitution conduceth much to the actions of the ſoule.

6. From the ſinfullneſſe and careleſneſſe of ſome Chriſtians above others, when as thorough the conceit of the eminency of their graces, they doe ſwell with pride, when they cannot bee thankfull for graces and abilities formerly received, when their imaginations

are meane of graces beſtowed, they thinking that they will not ſerve turne to their ſalvation; in a word, when they are inconſtant in duties and doe not ſtirre up the graces in them, wiſely watching the motions of the Spirit, and improoving the ſeaſons of grace; this is the thing which occaſioneth the inequality ſpoken of.

10. That no man miſſeth of Heaven for want of meaſures, but for want of the truth of grace, I grant a Chriſtians conſolation lieth much in the comparative degree, but his ſalvation is in the poſitive degree of grace, though one Chriſtian cannot beleeve as ſtrongly as another, yet beleeving hee ſhall bee ſaved as well as another; littleneſſe and greatneſſe of grace doe agree in ſaving iſſue;

iſſue; a weake and a ſoare eye in the *Iſraelites* did behold the brazen Serpent to health as well as a ſound and cleare eye, the hand of a little childe can lay hold of a pretious Jewell given unto it; juſt ſo is it here, difference in proportion and in operation of graces may ſtand with truth of grace and aſſurance of Heaven, one man rides faſter then another, yet both meet at length in the ſame Inne; one ſhip makes more ſpeed then another, yet both put in at the ſame harbour; and one Chriſtian hath more grace and doth more duty then another, yet both ſhall meete in one Chriſt and Heaven.

CASE. V.

Of failings in duties.

WHen Chriſtians doe looke upon their ſervices publike or private which they doe performe unto God, they finde many failings, eſpecially in the manner of their performance; Lord with what dullneſſe and deadneſſe and diſtraction of ſpirit doe Chriſtians pray, and heare, and meditate, and humble themſelves *&c.* upon this doe many Chriſtians miſ-judge themſelves, concluding againſt their ſelfe-ſincerity and ſoules comfort; now nothing is well done by them, and why ſhould they pray and reade, and heare, and receive

receive Sacraments any more; it is but ſinne that they doe, and it will but increaſe their judgement, this is a bitter and moſt deſperate temptation, and once given way unto, it doth leade a man farre into ſinne and trouble, for when once a man taketh exceptions againſt himſelfe for doing duties, that he will put himſelfe out of the way of duty, how eaſily doth he make himſelfe a prey unto Satan?

To the releevement of the ſoule under this burden, I ſhall yeeld you theſe meditations following.

Five ſettings againſt failings in duties.

1. That the beſt of Gods ſervants have beene, are, and may bee indiſpoſed in holy duties; though the ſpirit of *Peter* bee willing, yet the fleſh was weake, and there being contrary

Mat. 26. 41.

Gal. 5. 17. luſtings of the fleſh againſt the Spirit, a Chriſtian cannot doe the things he would; O how doth fleſh clog and dull the beſt of Gods Saints? there is within them a living ſpring without a lively operation; the ſpring I ſay is open, but the operation narrow, ſo as it is with them in the manner of their performing duties, as it is with a ſicke man, hee would faine *Simile.* walke a turne about his chamber, but alas hee cannot doe it his body is ſo weake.

2. That there is a wide difference betweene a heart that is dead unto duty, and a dull and indiſpoſed heart in duty; a dead heart wants a living ſpring and is contrary unto all duty; as it falls off from duty, ſo it gives it ſelfe an allowance and diſpenſation in the

the ſame, and can and doth find no trouble within it ſelfe under all *non*-performances of duties; whereas a Chriſtian under all his uneveneſſe in duties, hath an inward intention and inclination unto duties, ſuch men in their dulleſt times and greateſt indiſpoſitions ſee not more duties then they would doe, and are grieved becauſe they cannot doe duties in a more lively and ſpirituall manner; ſuch ſtand up from the dead and are ready for divine emploiment; there is a praying ſpirit in them; ſo as they can ſay with *Paul, the good that I would I doe not.* Rom. 7. 19.

There are two evidences when the bent of a mans heart is for duties in a living and right way.

Firſt, when a heavie kinde of performing duties is diſpleaſing

and contrary unto the frame of the ſoule and ſpirit of a man; ſuch men ſet upon duties ſorrowfully, and performe duties with feare, and riſe from duties humbled, greatly blaming themſelves for the heavineſſe and diſtraction of ſpirit which they obſerve to bee in themſelves.

Secondly, when the deſires are riſing out of the ſtate of indiſpoſition, ſuch men eaſily faſten upon the waies of quickning and bettering themſelves in duty, expecting that they may be ſhaken out of their fits of dullneſſe: I dare ſay that ſuch men will reade the more, and pray the more, and heare the more, hoping to finde ſome helpe in the uſe of the ordinances and performances of duties, they have heard and doe find it

to

to bee true, that frequencie in duty begets fervencie, that as a man by often rubbing of his benummed parts may get heate, ſo a Chriſtian by forcing himſelfe to the going over of duties, doth get ſtrength againſt his dullneſſe in duty. *Simile.*

3. That when a Chriſtian cannot doe duties with that life he ſhould and would doe, yet hee may doe them with much ſincerity and uprightneſſe of heart, and in a farre different way from a formall and carnall Chriſtian; I yeeld unto this, that an hypocrite who hath a name to live may talke much of duty and may mount high into the viſible duties of holineſſe, applying himſelfe to many religious actions; the Jewes were not fail'ing in their ſervices and ſacrifices, and ſolemne aſſemblies;

blies; but yet they came short of sincerity, and so all was lost labour unto them.

Seven differences betweene an hypocrite and a Christian in doing duties

You may aske mee what is the difference betwixt an hypocrite and a sincere Christian in doing duties?

I answer, it is much every way; which may bee seene in seven things.

First, a Christian doth performe all duties by the power of spirituall life wrought within his soule, he praieth, and beleeveth, and reades, and heares in the Spirit by vertue of the working of the Spirit; the principle of life in the soule is sufficient to it selfe to act required duties, it needs not altogether those naturall and accidentall helpes which false Christians must have to set them on work; the bird flies in the aire from a prin-

principle of life and motion in himſelfe, whereas a clock being a dead thing mooveth, becauſe the weights are powerfull to the wheeles. *Simile.*

Secondly, a Chriſtian is more generall or univerſall in the performance of duties then any hypocrite can be; he ſets himſelfe to duties of every kinde, even thoſe of the higheſt nature and excellencie; duties required admit of a diſtinction, there are the greater and the leſſer things of the Law; there are ſome duties which ſtrike at the quick and call for ſtrictneſſe, ſuch as are ſelfe-deniall ſinnes-mortification, the ſanctifying of God in a mans thoughts, deſires, and ſpeeches in all the conditions of life; ſome duties there are which are exceeding high and climbing,

bing, as beleeving in God and in Christ, and keeping the conversation in Heaven; to conclude, there are ordinary and extraordinary duties, publique and private duties, costly and painefull duties, and all these the spirit of soundnesse is for, Christians are ready to act all as well as one duty of holinesse; looke which way duty (whose latitude is much, and parts many) divides it selfe, thither they dispose themselves, that as water will runne in all prepared channels, so a Christian followeth all required duties, whereas hypocrisie doth duties with partiality and delicacie, it severs and divides duties, it will bee upon this, but not on that duty, and is neither whole nor lively in any duty; and no marvaile, for as

waters

waters cannot riſe higher then their ſprings, no more can an hypocrite riſe higher then himſelfe in duty. *Simile.*

Thirdly, a Chriſtian doth act ſpirituall duties ſpiritually, in the purpoſe and reſolution of his heart hee doth empty himſelfe of fleſh and corruption (which will bee creeping into duty) as much as may be; ſuch an one undertakes no duty, but with ſelfe-examination and ſoule-humiliation for ſin committed and remaining within, ſuch follow the Law of the ſpirit, exerciſing all vouchſafed graces in the performance of duties; Chriſtians indeed doe heare and pray with much knowledge, faith, feare, humility, *&c.* and by reaſon of the performance of the duty they become more ſpirituall;

I ſay a Chriſtian in duty is another man from what hee is at other times, ſuch heavenly raptures and ſoule-raviſhments doe befall him, that in a manner he feeles no world, no place, no time; whereas a formall Chriſtian is a baſe and mixt mettall, formality leades him into duties carnall, keepes him in duties carnall, and brings him off from duties not onely carnall, but much more ſinnefull and prophane then hee was before.

Fourthly, a Chriſtian doth performe duties encreaſingly; his deſires are ſuch and ſo great unto duty, that he cannot give himſelfe any ſatisfaction in doing duties; his ſpirit within him is like unto leaven which is of a riſing nature, or to the graine of muſtard-ſeed which was

was of a ſpreading nature; the ſoule wil be carried with vehement deſire of bettering it ſelfe in duty, and performing more and more duty unto God, nay it riſeth in duty againſt oppoſition, that as a living ſpring doth worke out its way againſt dammings and ſtoppings up, ſo a ſound Chriſtian will doe duties wraſtling with his owne lyther and ſluggiſh nature, yea and withſtanding Satan in his temptations; oile can bee no more kept under by water then a Chriſtian can be kept of from duty and increaſings in duties. I grant that at the firſt a Chriſtian is and may be little and low in duty, but at length an enlargement will follow anſwerable to the life beſtowed and duties to be performed; *Davids* ſpring at ſometimes did but drop gently, *Simile.*

gently, at other times it did run freely and fully, whereas the hypocrite keepes him in a circle or compaſſe, he is confined and limited, and is much like unto artificiall bodies uncapable of extenſion; reſtings and ſufficits overtake ſuch men, and if there be any ſwellings in duties, it is not from an incorporated principle of grace which is within as a feeding ſpring, but from ſome externall reaſon and influence; there may bee the riſing of waters in a pond by the powring downe of raine from the clouds, and duties may be done by an hypocrite with much abundance whilſt judgements or mercies are ſtirrings.

Simile.

Fifthly, a Chriſtian exerciſeth himſelfe in ſpirituall duties chearefully, ſuch doe ſpirituall

tuall actions pleaſingly, as with willingneſſe of heart, ſo with gladneſſe of heart; it is meate and drinke and recreation unto them to performe ſpirituall duties, *Exod.*35.29. *Pſal.*100.2. *Pſal.*110.*verſ.*3. *Epheſ.*6.5,6. whereas hypocriſie is of a Bearish nature, ſlow to the duty; it is mooved, it mooves not it ſelfe; to a formall heart 1. Spirituall duties are grievous and tedious, and though ſomething bee done, yet it is with ſecret wearineſſe, reluctancie, and unwillingneſſe, there are many objections raiſed up againſt duties, and many caſes and queſtions which muſt be anſwered and reſolved before ſuch can ſet on to duty. 2. The cloſing up of ſpirituall duties is very pleaſing and delightfull, the Lord knoweth that

that as in his heart hee wiſheth there were no time nor duties belonging to God, ſo hee is glad of a ſuddaine releaſe from all duties, the ſhorter the Sermon and the ſhorter the prayers the more pleaſing, ſuch is the incongruity of ſpirituall ſervices with carnall hearts, and if that any joy and delight bee in them at all, it is but falſe and vaniſhing.

Sixthly, a Chriſtian doth performe duties conſtantly; ſuch men have everlaſting ſpirits in ſerving God, and though there may be pawſes and certaine ceſſations by reaſon of ſome intervenient accidents, yet a totall and finall ceſſation in duty cannot overtake Chriſtians; grace in truth never dieth unto duty, but holds out unto the very laſt in beleeving, obeying,

obeying, and praying, whereas an hypocrite according to his falſe and vaniſhing principles is mutable and inconſtant in duty; according to that ſpeech, *Will the hypocrite delight himſelfe in the Almighty?* will hee alwaies call upon God? ſometimes hee may doe it, but at all times he neither can nor will pray. Iob 27.10

Seventhly, a Chriſtian doth act all required duties diſcreetly and wiſely; I meane with the obſervation of the rules and requiſites and methods which wiſedome it ſelfe doth declare unto men in and for the performance of duties; ſuch will principally doe thoſe duties which are ſutable and proper to themſelves and falling in their relations and conditions, and that within their owne

owne orbe, whereas hypocriſie wanders from its owne neſt, and doth prey abroad in other mens families, but not at home in their owne families; ſuch will manage duties mooving on-ward in a juſt proportion; they ſpend not all the time in duties of faith, and duties of charity alone, but ſo doe one act of godlineſſe that they may doe another alſo, one buſineſſe doth not put by another with them, as it doth with hypocrites, who in doing of ſome duties hinder themſelves in other; in a word, ſuch are ſeaſonable in doing duties; though no time bee unſeaſonable for Chriſtian duties, yet all duties muſt not bee performed at all times; Chriſtians muſt heare when God requires them to heare, and pray when God

God requireth them to pray, they muſt bring forth all their fruit in the ſeaſon of it; whereas the ſervice of hypocriſie is fruit out of ſeaſon, ſuch as are formall will bee comming to Church when others are going from Church, they will pray when they ſhould heare, and reade when they ſhould pray, which maketh their ſervice the ſacrifice of fooles, *Eccleſ.*5.1. Pſal.1.3.

4. That in the doing of Chriſtian duties the bent of the heart is both obſerved and accepted of God; you cannot forget the counſell of *David* unto *Salomon*, *Know thou the God of thy Father, and ſerve him with a perfect heart and a willing minde, for the Lord ſearcheth all hearts, and underſtandeth all the imaginations of* 1 Chron 28.9.

the

the thoughts, if thou seeke him hee will bee found of thee: out of which place we gather, that God doth behold the heart in duty; and him that prepareth his heart to seeke him, *though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary shall bee accepted with him*; view well the sincerity of your performances, and let it cheare you against your weaknesses.

2 Chron. 30.19,20.

5. That Christians under weakneſſe of performances, muſt have an eye unto Christ who appeares for them in Heaven, preſenting all ſervices done unto the acceptation of his Father; learne to know, that what we cannot do perfectly, Christ did it for us, his active obedience being imputed to us, and though duties come from us in much weakneſſe, yet Christ makes

makes up our duties as well as our perſons; a ſincere heart muſt act duties, a gratious God muſt accept duties, a mighty Redeemer muſt preſent duties, *the Angell had a golden Cenſor and much incenſe that he ſhould offer it with the prayers of the Saints upon the golden altar*; wee know that the acceptation of a Chriſtians beſt ſervices is in Chriſt alone, and it is no life in our duties that can make them meritorious with God, yea and it is no impotency in duties which can cauſe God to reject them, if we by faith betake our ſelves to Chriſt; In Chriſt there is ſufficiencie of merit to cover all our ſelfe-blamed indiſpoſitions, and to gaine the acceptance of all our ſincere, though weake performances. Rev 8. 3.

CASE. VI.

Of fruitleſſe endeavours.

MAn looketh for wages when hee hath done his work; and if duty and ſervice proove ſucceſſeleſſe that hee finde no returne or recompence at all, this is not a little grieving and ſadding unto the Spirit; we heare Chriſtians thus complaining, I have along time waited upon God in ſervice, I have beene converſant with him in his Ordinances, many a Sermon have I heard, many a Sacrament have I received; I have humbled my ſoule before him in prayer, and teares, and faſting, and I alas can find no returne of my prayers, I cannot get

get anything at Gods hands, my corruptions are yet within mee, I am ſtill where I was, and am no better, and can doe no more then formerly, my abilities are as little, and my comforts as few as ever; ſurely all is not well with mee, and all is not even betwixt God and my ſoule; how goeth his promiſe along with mee, ſeeing I finde no performance to mee? here the ſoule is muſing and doubtfull.

To eaſe the ſoule under this diſtreſſe, I ſhall propoſe theſe things.

1. That no man ſhall doe the leaſt ſervice for God which ſhall be in vaine unto himſelfe; God is a good Maſter, as hee ſets us about the beſt worke, ſo he will give us the beſt wages, no man ſhall ſerve God for

Mal. 1. 10 1 Cor. 15. *ult.*

nought; wee see that God taketh it ill when the Jewes charged him with neglect and irrecompence for their serving of him, *Mal.* 3. 13, 14, 15.

2. That want of present wages must not dishearten Christians in the doing of their duties; up and be doing, and trust God for wages; service and progresse in duties belongs to us, & their rewards and recompences belong to God; wee must doe our part, and *not bee wearie in well-doing: for in due season wee shall reape if we faint not*; the husband-man is to plow the land, and to sow the corne if he expect the harvest, and so Christians must first doe their duties of hearing, and praying, and reading, if they will have Gods wages.

Gal. 6. 9.

3. That

3. That unto our preſent doing, we muſt add waiting and expectation; *Our eyes waite upon the Lord till he have mercy upon us,* ſaith *David*; if beggars will not ſtay they looſe their almes, and if Chriſtians will not waite they may looſe their grants; and why ſhould wee not waite? in all Gods promiſes there is ſuch a truth which ſhall be performed, and hee hath made many pretious promiſes unto waiting for the performance of his promiſes, *None ſhall bee aſhamed that waite on mee, Eſa.* 49.23. *David waited upon God and hee enclined to him and heard his cry, Pſal.* 40.1. Pſal.123.2

4. That the Lords anſwers of good ſhall at length recommence and equall all the ſervices and patience of man; how

ever for the preſent deferre his comforts, and put off thy complaints, and the time is long and tedious unto thee, yet know, that a Chriſtian is ſure to ſpeed well with God at the laſt, and he ſhall have his recompences in the beſt things at the beſt time, there is a time and day which God will not overpaſſe; *The viſion is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it ſhall ſpeake and ſhall not lie, though it tarry, waite for it, becauſe it will ſurely come, it will not tarry, Hab.* 2.3. Thou haſt done God much ſervice and made many prayers unto him, and yet nothing commeth of it, waite and thou ſhalt never repent thee of thy paines and patience, conſider but theſe three things.

1. That a man cannot waite too

too long for promiſed mercies, they being the moſt excellent and uſefull of all mercies for Chriſtians.

2. That God is wiſe and good in cauſing ſpaces betweene our endeavours and his recompences; God herein is either chaſtning ſome for former neglect of accepting grace offered in the day of grace, or preparing the ſoule for the receiving and enjoying of his recompences.

3. That the longer any one ſtayeth without Gods wages, the better and greater it ſhall bee when it comes; *God will give unto his their wages with an increaſe, hee will give them double comfort*, Eſa. 40.2. doubt not of this but that God will fulfill your deſires to the full, and comforts firſt or laſt ſhall

come in ſuch a plentifull meaſure, that they ſhall make amends for all; *Abraham* waited long for *Iſaack*, and hee had him at the laſt, and though the world recompence the beſt worke with the worſt wages, yet God doth not ſoe, but will crowne all our endeavours to his owne praiſe and the comfort of his.

CASE. VII.

Of Relapſes into ſinnes after reſolutions and premiſes and pardons.

THe impudencies of ſin are ſuch, that they make their returnes upon the chaſt hearts of Gods Saints, and the weakeneſſe of Chri-

Chriſtians is ſuch that they fall into ſinne often, multiplying ſinne very farre, and here they reſt not, but many times notwithſtanding purpoſes and promiſes and better reſolutions they ſlacke againe in their watchfullneſſe, and notwithſtanding their recovery out of ſinnes, they returne againe unto folly and act the ſame ſinnes againe; it may happen to them as unto many men under their diſeaſes; they may in ſome good meaſure recover ſtrength and health, and there may bee certaine diſcontinuations of the violent workings of the diſeaſe, but yet there may be a falling back of them into the ſame diſeaſe even unto great danger; juſt ſo, they may not only lapſe and receive a recovery out of the ſame by the hand of mercy,

Relapſing into ſinne what it is

but after a long ſpace of diſcontinuance, even when they have ſeemed to have parted from their old ſinnefull practiſes, they may bee brought backe againe to the ſecond acting of the ſame ſinnes; which evill doth befall them upon theſe or the like grounds.

Cauſes of relapſes ſinne.

1. From boldneſſe without a warrant, they adventuring upon their owne ſtrength, and forgetting the ſtrength of ſinfull occaſions; preſumptuous patients feeling their legs againe, will abroad into the aire, and finding ſome appetite will feed on any kinde of forbidden meate, and hereby they fall backe againe; and preſumptuous ſinners ſoone forget themſelves and ſoone relapſe into ſinne.

2. From feare againſt the pro-

promiſe, they having their eyes too open unto troubles which they deſire to ſhun, and out of feare of enduring miſery, they have adventured ſo farre, that they have miſerably brought themſelves downe againe by ſinne; I know nothing which made *Abraham* more to redouble his lying then the redoubling of his feares, he had his eyes too much upon the preſervation of his life, he was afraid that they would *kill* him for his *Sarahs* ſake, and therefore once and againe hee hazarded her chaſtity, and his owne truth. Gen. 12. 13. & 20. 11.

3, From diſlike without a cauſe; diſcontentednesſe among the *Iſraelites* made them in their ſoules to long the ſecond time for the fleſh-pots of Egypt, though Egypt was formerly unto

unto them a houſe of bondage, the deſire of alteration, and mens unwillingneſſe to bee that which God would have them to be, hath beene and is a great cauſe of their fearefull relapſes into ſinnes.

4. From ſtanding without a watch; when Chriſtians minde not a falling whilſt that they are ſtanding; but remit their watch, and holy jealouſie, omitting the meanes of ſtedfaſtneſſe, they quit their owne ſtrength of ſtanding, and quickly relapſe; if a ſicke man grow careleſſe of his diet, or a lame man throw away his crutches, and a Chriſtian grow mindleſſe of his falling, they are in a like condition of ſlipping back.

5. From ſtraites without faith; croſſes not borne by faith have returned many to

their

their old way, the want of water and bread, cauſed the *Iſraelites* more then once or twice to glide into the ſins of murmuring and diſtruſt.

6. From company without choiſe; all ſociety hath a force in it, it brings with it fire or water; it is an encouragement, or diſcouragement unto ſinne; the *Iſraelites*, being mingled among the Heathens, learned their works, and fell to idolatry the ſecond time, *Pſal.*106.35. flaming brands will not more ſet on fire quenched ſticks, then ſinfull companies will revive dead purpoſes unto ſinfullneſſe; experience ſheweth that the joyning with old companions, hath made men to reſume their former exceſſe of riot, contrary unto their former reſolutions and promiſes.

7. From

7. From the Spirit without assistance; if the Spirit take away his hand, or deny his actuall assistance, the Christian presently relapseth; take away the fire from the water and it will returne to its native coldnesse; let the Sun once set and the ayre will returne to its wonted darknesse, and let the Spirit (which is our strength) once withdraw or suspend, and wee sinke, and fall, and sinne, and sinne againe.

Simile.

8. From extremities forgotten; time was that Christians did finde and feele the bitternesse and horror of sinne, the stinging effects thereof remaining fresh and sensible in the conscience, and then they did abhorre and feare to sinne, they did vow and promise not to sinne; take wee a drunkard that hath

hath ſurfeted with wine or ſtrong drink, and whilſt hee is under the ſcorchings of his ſinſickneſſe, bring unto him wine and ſtrong drink, O he cannot abide it; but when the ſickneſſe is over, and the experiments of ſinnes extremity buried, he will riſe from the ſmaller beare to the ſtrong, and from that to the ſtrongeſt wine againe, and as certaine it is that when men do forget what their ſins have coſt them, they will gradually ſlide into their old courſe of ſinning againe.

9. From brethren deſpiſed; there is a great evill among Chriſtians; they are not onely many times ungroundedly too too ſuſpicious, over-credulous and cenſorious of their brethren; but over incompaſſionate and ſtrangely inſulting over their

their brethren in their failings, especially where they least affect, wee shall heare such griefeleſſe and disgracing narrations of Christians miscarriages, even by Christians themselves, that it would make a man to question whether all wisdome and mercy bee not banished out of their hearts; now when God seeth this proud and envious and spitefull spirit in any of his owne children, hee lets them also bee tempted, and under temptations they are permitted to fall, that they may learne to be more mercifull to the names of their bretheren, and to make them know that the sinne that overturnes one Christian may overturne any Christian, and that one Christian seeing another to fall, should compassionately

helpe

helpe him up, and not ſcornefully caſt him off; reade *Gal.6.1.*

Theſe things with many other cauſing the relapſing of Chriſtians into ſinne, doe make the ſoules of Chriſtians under its relapſings heavie and ſad; they conſidering within themſelves that the baſeneſſe of relapſing is likened to the *dog turning to his vomit, and the ſow that is waſhed wallowing in the mire,* it doth greatly trouble and diſquiet them; concerning the ſetling of Chriſtians labouring under this evill, I ſhall onely propound five things of principall knowledge and uſe.

2 Pet. 2. 22.

Five ſettlements under relapſes.

Firſt, that all Relapſings into ſinne are great evills, whereſoever they are found; relapſing argueth corruption, yea, and a ſinfull diſpoſition in man; There is not onely the evill of ſin

sinne in this condition, but wee shall finde many bitter effects and issues befalling Christians under their relapses, for they do not onely hereby object themselves to many temporall punishments, *Psal.* 78. 61,62,63 but unto these foure spirituall evills.

1. Soule-disquietment, the peace of conscience being broken by every relapse; I say relapses are of a disquieting nature to conscience in these five respects.

Relapses disquieting to conscience in five respects.

1. Because they bring back all former guilts, and with that all the former burdens and feares and terrors.
2. Because they yeeld unto conscience matter of undeniable accusation; the doubling of sin doth double

double the accuſation and vexation of conſcience.

3. Becauſe they are the aggravation of ſinne unto man.

4. Becauſe they make the foundations and reſting places of the ſoule queſtionable, relapſes put a man to cleare and proove his former grants and aſſurances to Heaven, and his owne ſincerity to God, and in Religion.

5. Becauſe they doe greatly advantage temptations unto deſpaire, Chriſtians are never more apt to deſpaire then upon the conſideration of their often falling into ſinne.

2. Diſ-

2. Discouragement in all accesses unto God; the Christian cannot with that confidence and boldnesse draw neare unto God in prayer having relapsed, as els hee might have done; how can such beleeve that God will love them, and heare them, when as they have dealt so falsly with him, having promised him not to sinne, and mocked and abused him in his mercy and pitty and patience, he having formerly pardoned them their sins.

3. Disablement unto renewed repentance; Now Christians doe finde it more difficult to returne from sinne, their soules being sunke deeper into sinne, and more entangled by sinne then formerly it was; take mee a Christian that is but single in sinne, and hee findeth the

the difficulties of repenting to bee great; but how doth Satan renew his power, and a Chriſtian looſe his ſtrength, when that the ſame ſinnes are repeated over and over; aſſuredly there is ſtrange ſtrengthenings of ſin in relapſing into ſinnes, one ſinne living in and by another.

4. Feares of death, O how unwelcome is the newes of death, and how unwilling are ſuch to die who have often fallen into the ſame ſinnes? Relapſes doe put a ſting into death, making it very terrible unto the ſonnes of men.

2. That the Elect of God may fall backe againe into the ſame ſinnes; there is I ſay a poſſible incidency of relapſing unto perſons of all ſorts: it is moſt certaine, that wicked men who

who are ordained to destruction may relapse, *Pharaoh* though humbled for the present, did notwithstanding harden his heart againe and againe; yea and they who are good and holy and have soundly repented them of their former sins may yet relapse: the example of *Abraham*, *Lot*, *Peter*, and *Israel* doth declare it, how often doth God lay this sinne unto the charge of his people? *Ier.*3.12. & 14 22. *Psal.*78. 57. and no marvaile, for though their repentance bee sound, yet their mortification is imperfect, in this life there is no sinfull disposition wholy rooted up, and dried in sanctified persons, and corruption remaining will put forth its nature into more and more acts, yea and into the same acts of sinning; as long as sinne re-

retaines its nature, it doth and will retaine the inclinations and operations of that nature alſo; if the fire be not wholy put out, who will thinke it impoſſible that it ſhould catch and burne againe?

3. That though the act of relapſing bee incident both to good and bad, yet it is in a differing manner, which I ſhall open unto you in the diſtinctions of relapſings.

Relapſes into ſinne by the godly differ from relapſes into ſin by the wicked.

First, there are relapſes { 1. Naturall. 2. Accidentall.

Naturall relapſes are ſuch as ſpring from a diſpoſition and temper that is wholy ſinnefull and for ſinne; if a man by a coard pluck up very high the weight of a jack or clock, yet it hath a naturall propenſion to fall downe againe, you need not drive the ſow to the mire, nor the

Relapſes { Naturall

Simile.

the dog unto his vomit, their owne naturall love and delight will returne them; the truth is, that though externall and intervenient occasions may pen up or restraine the violence of corruption for a time, yet such is the inward disposition of a naturall man unto sinne, that hee soone returnes to his old course againe; skin up the soare and the ulcer will breake out againe, and if the heart bee not changed, but chained by the power of restraining graces alone, man will returne to his old vomit and vaine course.

2. Accidentall.

Accidentall Relapses are such which befall the godly by sudden and strong temptations; a land flood may carry back pieces of timber from the banke into the remote places of the

the ground; an unexpected gale may drive the Marriner backe into the harbour againe, and it is as poſſible that temptations may breake in with that violence, that Chriſtians may bee over-borne, and carried away to thoſe ſinnes which their ſoules doe moſt ſincerely abhorre, and they have ſolemnely covenanted againſt, yet here the effect and the intention are contrary, heart and ſinne being at difference and upon teames of defiance.

Secondly, Relapſes may bee either into the acts of ſinne, or elſe into the exerciſe of ſinne; one ſick perſon falls back into ſome fits onely, another returneth under the power of his diſeaſe againe; the godly man falls backe into ſome particular

sinne, but there hee staieth not, for though hee fall hee riseth againe; hee is as a man fallen into the water, but he gets out quickly; the wicked falls backe into the courses of sinne againe, lying downe in their falling backe, their end being worse then their beginning.

Relapses 1. Voluntary.

Thirdly, Relapses are { 1. Voluntary. 2. Involuntary.

Voluntary Relapses are such as have the propension & complacencie of the heart in them; the sea doth as naturally ebb, as it doth flow, and wicked men make their returnes unto sinfull courses with much more delight then their departures; O how glad is a Jayle-bird of the opportunity of liberty to goe to his old haunts? and much more joyfull is every wicked

wicked man when hee is at liberty to feed himſelfe upon his ſinfull pleaſures, hee doth even bewaile his miſery that hee was kept ſo long from them.

2. Involuntary.

Involuntary Relapſes are ſuch as ariſe contrary to the intention and affection of perſons, it is not the pure love of ſin that drawes backe the godly into ſinning againe, which may appeare in the conſequent of their relapſing, they are not now, as a fiſh newly taken out and newly leapt againe into the water, in their proper element, a ſinfull way and courſe cannot bee agreeable to their ſoules, they finde no reſt in a ſinning condition, but their ſoules are ſicke and ſad, they weepe and are troubled exceedingly, and can receive no comfort in

themſelves untill they ſee themſelves recovered againe; as wee may ſee in *David* and *Peter*.

Fourthly, there are Relapſes in { 1. Conqueſt. 2. Combate.

Relapſes 1. In conqueſt.

Relapſes in conqueſt is when a man out of malice and obſtinacie of heart, without all ground or cauſe is carried backe againe as a ſlave unto his ſinfull doings; ſome men never ſticke at the matter, their hearts find no manner of ſtop, and nothing within puts an impediment to their returnes; the heart and the ſinne are now in league, and they like the way of ſinne exceedingly; the ſtate of wicked men in returning to their ſinnes, is much anſwering to the returnes of a man unto his bed to take his reſt and ſleepe, hee loveth his

his bed and vexeth at every thing that keepes him from going into it; juſt ſo the heart of every wicked man likes the ſin, but hates the impediment, nothing at all doth awe him from ſinning againe, but the ſhame and puniſhment of ſin; and he accounts that word and friend his enemy which ſtops him in ſinning.

Relapſes in combate is, when a man is reduced to his old ſin, but it is with much feare, ſecret reluctancie, and ſome oppoſition; *I ſee another law in my members warring againſt the law of my minde, and bringing mee into captivity to the law of ſinne,* ſaith *Paul*, a good man relapſeth reſiſting; his reducing into ſinne is much after the manner of the bringing backe of an eſcaped priſoner, when

2. In combate.

Rom. 7. 23

hee eſpies ſuch as would tak him hee runnes from them, and hides from them, and hee is not eaſily laid hold of or brought home againe, many eſcapes he makes by the way, and would rather die in the place then returne; and ſo ſurely doth a Chriſtian ſtrive with griefes and teares and prayers againſt all returnes into ſinne.

Relapſes 1. Hurtfull

Fifthly, Relapſes in reſpect of their effects are {1. Pernicious. 2. Profitable.

The unſound heart by falling backe into ſinne, growes more and more hardned and inſenſible, more careleſſe and froward in ſinning, more free and forward in ſinning; acting his old ſinnes with greater love and delight then ever.

2 Helpfull

God doth good men good by

by their relapſings; though there bee no good in ſinne, yet it is good that ſinne bee, and the wiſedome of God can and doth turne it unto the good of his, I ſay this is the accidentall effect of the godly mans falling into ſinne, greater humiliation and ſorrow, greater watchfullneſſe and feare, greater dependance on God; ſtronger covenants and reſolutions; deeper loathings, and greater conqueſt over ſinnes; In theſe five didiſtinctions you may obſerve the difference of relapſes in good and bad men.

4. That the ſinne of relapſing is pardonable; it is ſuch a ſinne which God hath pardoned, and hee can and will pardon; Chriſt doth tell us, *that all manner of ſinne and blaſphemie ſhall bee forgiven unto men*

excepting that againſt the Holy Ghoſt, Mat.12.31. under that phraſe of all manner of ſinne relapſing is included; God doth not ſhut the gate of mercy againſt all relapſing ſinners, and becauſe this is made a ground of trouble unto many Chriſtians, that they doe conceive ſuch a ſinne cannot bee pardoned, I will briefely evidence the pardonableneſſe of Relapſes.

Two reaſons prooving the pardonableneſſe of relapſes.

Firſt, that ſinne unto which the promiſe of curing is made, is pardonable to Gods children; for God never cures ſin, but where hee firſt covers it; but the promiſe of healing is made unto backſliding; *Returne yee backeſliding children, and I will heale your backſlidings*, ſaith God, *Ier.3.22. Hoſea 14.4.*

Se-

Secondly, that ſinne is pardonable to Chriſtians, unto which is annexed a poſſibility of repentance; for God hath promiſed pardoning mercy to penitent ſinners; but a Chriſtian may repent of it, for repentance was required of backſliding *Iſrael*, *Returne*, ſaith God, yea and it was practiſed alſo, *Behold wee come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God*; conſider ſeriouſly of *Peters* condition, were not his bitter and briniſh teares the repenting of his folly in ſo often denying his maſter? Ier. 3. 22.

5. That as there are meanes to keepe from relapſing, ſo there are meanes to deliver out of relapſing into ſinne; wee may not weakely conceive, that becauſe wee have made our returnes into ſinne contrary

unto our promiſes and purpoſes, that wee ſhall never get out of them againe; this is the way to keepe the ſoule in hell upon earth; I grant you

Delivery from relapſes

1. That revolting into ſinne is greatly diſpleaſing to God.

1. Difficult

2. That it is a difficult thing to get out of a ſinne into which a man hath often relapſed; a man cannot be healed and recovered without much paine and much adoe the ſecond or third time of the ſame diſeaſe.

2. Poſſible.

Yet I pray you deſpaire not your hearts; ſuppoſe the worſt, that the ſinnes which you have fallen into againe are great, and grievous ſinnes, and that they were not unwilling omiſſions, or ſuddaine paſſions, but had knowledge and premeditation

tion in them; that they were ſinnes once repented of and ſolemnely vowed againſt, 1. All this and much more makes the recovery to bee difficult not deſperate. 2. The ſinnes that *Abraham*, *Lot*, and *Peter* fell into, were great and hainous ſinnes, and yet they recovered againe. 3. There is no diſeaſe beyond Gods cure, or ſinne above his pardon; cannot God pardon ſinne oft? ſurely God that hath once mercifully recovered his, falling backe, will alſo doe it the ſecond and third, and fourth, and every time for his.

Ob. But many fall backe into ſinne and doe never recover themſelves againe, and this may be my caſe?

Sol. True, ſome diſeaſes are dangerous and ſome are deadly, and

and there are relapſes curable and incurable; ſuch who falling back out of malice and obſtinacie, reſting themſelves in a conſtant delight of thoſe ſinnes into which they have relapſed, making their ſinne their gaine, can gaine no aſſurance of healing; but ſuch as fall backe through incogitancie and infirmitie, being exceeding troubled at heart for their ſinnes and relapſes into their ſinnes, may expect and ſhall finde a cure.

Leave diſputing and uſe theſe meanes following, and by the bleſſing of God you ſhall get out of your diſeaſes of ſinne into which you are relapſed.

Foure meanes to get out of relapſes.

Firſt, worke the relapſes upon your ſoules; repeated ſinnes are as broad and deepe wounds, of which if a man meane to bee

ſoundly cured, hee muſt admit of a ſound and thorough ſearch; relapſes into ſinne are like the returnes of the diſtemper into the body, of which if a man expect to bee rid, hee muſt reſolve to fetch up and finde out the diſtempering cauſe; untill a man ſoundly feeleth, and truly knoweth the evillneſſe of relapſes, hee will not ſeeke out for any recoverie; by the helpe of judgement, conſcience, and the law, wee may finde out the full evill of relapſes into ſin.

Secondly, phyſick the ſoule for this ſinne, wee are to drink downe the bitter potion of repentance, wee muſt not thinke to come off of this ſin with a few teares and a little ſorrow; renewed ſtaines in the ſoule are not eaſily gotten off;

we must lie down in our shame,
*Ier.3.25. and our confusion must cover us; renewed sinnes must have our renewed sorrowes, and renewed hatred, the more a man sinnes, the more reason hath he to hate sinne: and the oftner he sins one sin, the more reason hath hee to labour the mortifying of that; get above all things a strong and setled hatred and abhomination of all sinnes for time to come, and an unfeigned sorrow for sinnes past.

Thirdly, keepe to the Ordinances, our spirituall recovery is by meanes, who though they can do little of themselves, yet being blessed and assisted they can doe much; these set out relapses to the life; quicken the heart to sorrow; breake open the riches of Gods unspeake-

ſpeakeable mercy and goodneſſe in promiſes of pardon and healing; and doe greatly enable the heart to beleeve all promiſed mercy.

Fourthly, haſt in unto God, ſuing out the promiſes which hee hath made in the Covenant; let no feares or diſtruſts keepe you off; but goe in unto God or elſe you periſh; your diſeaſes are your owne; but all recoveries doe belong to God, who hath undertaken to cure all that returne to him; and therefore come to God againe

Hoſ. 13 9. Ier 3.22.

A three-fold way of comming to God for cure.

1. With confeſſion, freely and humbly acknowledging your fault with the Church, *Ier.3.13.*

2. With petition, intreating his pardon and his peace, ſay, *receive us gratiouſly, Hoſ.14 2,4.*

3. With

3. With faith, perſwading thy ſoule from the promiſe and performance of God that thou ſhalt be healed.

There are ſeverall promiſes made to anſwer all the poſſible exigencies of Chriſtians; and why doth God make promiſes of healing and forgiving the backſlidings of his people? is it not to encourage the hearts of his children to lay hold on that promiſe, and to ſue it out in the needfull time? ſurely if we did more ſpeedily and heartily beſet the Lord, wee ſhould finde a great healing of our revoltings and backſlidings.

CASE.

CASE. VIII.

Of ſtrange and terrible thoughts following Chriſtians.

A Chriſtian hath a double converſation, from whence troubles doe ariſe unto him, one is outward, another is inward, that notes the whole carriage of the life; this the courſe of the whole ſoule; a Chriſtian is not a little troubled with himſelfe being wiſe to ſtudy himſelfe and to finde out the frame and temper of his heart, and made tender to feele even the leaſt erroneous flaſhings of the apprehending faculty, ſuch as his thoughts are, which doth proove unto him great ſoule-burdens

burdens, as I shall now open unto you in this manner, shewing to you foure things.

Foure things about the thoughts of men.

1. That thoughts are of three sorts, 1. Naturall. 2. Spirituall. 3. Sinfull.

Three sorts of thoughts. 1 Natural

Naturall thoughts are those motions, stirrings, and acts which reside or are framed in the sensible, and intellectuall part of man; and they doe comprehend under them those reasonings, consultations, purposes, resolutions, intents, meditations, considerations, conceits and apprehensions, which the understanding by the helpe of fancie frames within it selfe; these following the nature of man in constitution and creation, and immediately resulting from the mind of man, are not unfitly called

naturall

naturall thoughts; man is borne and was made a thinking creature, ſuch thoughts will be in us do what we can, it being naturall to the mind to be thinking; and if we take ſuch thoughts in a ſimple conſideration they are no ſinnes or faults. the minde of *Adam* in Creation yea and of Chriſt himſelfe (who was in all things like unto us ſinne excepted) were full of ſuch thoughts rightly compoſed; they had many tranſactions in their mindes, yea and their mindes held notable diſcourſes with the things that they knew, and touching things to be done; they had their fore-thoughts preparing them to actions, and they had their after-thoughts recollecting things done by them.

Spirituall thoughts are thoſe motions 2. Spiritual

motions and turnings of the minde, flowing from the work of grace in the ſoule, and determining themſelves in ſpirituall and ſupernaturall objects; there are two things which doe conſtitute the ſpirituallneſſe of mans thoughts.

1. The originall cauſe of them; namely their ſpringing from a ſanctified fountaine that is cloſed within the ſoule, the mind muſt bee renewed and ſanctified, altered, and cleanſed, ere it can and doth yeeld out holy inclinations, and motions, and have within it holy projects, counſells, imaginations and reaſonings.
2. The ſpeciall object of them; the thoughts pitching

pitching themſelves in a right way upon things that are divinely good, and making for Gods glory, and mans ſalvation are ſaid to bee ſpirituall.

Theſe kinde of thoughts are peculiar unto Gods Saints after regeneration, *for without the Spirit no man is able to thinke one good thought*, 2 *Cor.* 3. 5. as for wicked men if wee conſider their thoughts formerly they are ſtarke naught; yea and if wee conſider them objectively, they may bee naturally and morally ((*i.e.*) as they moove in the way of nature, and tend to the good of a civill ſtate and countrey) good; but ſpiritually good they are not, they no way further their ſanctification and obedience, but doe

doe occaſion much hardneſſe and ſinfullneſſe unto them.

3. Sinfull. Sinnefull thoughts are the motions and ſtirrings of mans mind unto ſinne, when the mind by the object or the ſubject doth muſe on ſinne and wickedneſſe, repreſenting and acting over the ſame in imagination and ſpeculation, entertaining and harbouring the ſame in proviſion; arting and skilling it ſelfe in the cunnings and methods thereof that it may become wittie in wickedneſſe; and is continually framing, plotting, and deviſing wickedneſſe within it ſelfe.

Mat. 5. 28. Rom. 13. 14. Pro. 6. 18. Eſa. 32. 7.

Two ſorts of evill thoughts. 2. That ſinnefull and evill thoughts are of two ſorts.

1. Aſcending thoughts, which flow from the corrupt heart of man; *Out of the heart proceed evill*

evill thoughts, ſaith Chriſt, *Mat.*15.19 there is not a more entire cauſe of ſinnefull thoughts then ſinfull corruption, evill thoughts muſt have an evill principle; waters doe not more iſſue out from a full fountaine, then ſinfull thoughts do ſpring from a ſinnefull nature.

2. Injected thoughts; whoſe working is inward, but cauſe outward, Satan doth venture upon the thoughts, and gets his entrance into the ſoule by them; one of the Fathers tells us, [a] that a wicked thought is the divels eldeſt daughter; this one thing I am ſure of, that as naturall corruption

[a] *Mala cogitatio Diaboli primogenita Hieron.*

ruption is mother, so Satan is ordinarily father unto vile thoughts in men; Satan put into [b] *David* the thought of numbring his people, and Satan filled the heart of *Ananias that hee lied to the Holy Ghost*, *Acts* 5.3.

[b] 1 Chron 21.1.

Happily curiosity may here enquire into the just difference betweene those sinfull thoughts which ascend from mans nature, and such which are injected by Satan?

Certaine it is that there is a reall difference; but for my part I cannot peremptorily conclude it; a Christian may know, that the divell hath beene in his heart and layd his egg there, and shuffled in his motion there; but because there is such a mixture

mixture of ſeeds in the generation of ſinfull thoughts which are monſtrous, and that both of them are like *Simeon* and *Levi*, brethren in evill, it is to mee a point of great difficulty to determine their apprehenſive difference; yet I reverence thoſe Divines and their opinions who have given out the probable differences betweene Diabolicall and Naturall thoughts, in their unnaturallneſſe, unreaſonableneſſe, ſuddaineſſe and unceſſantneſſe, unto whoſe reaſons I leave my Reader, and doe proceed to teach you.

3. That ſinfull thoughts divide and multiply themſelves ſeverally. Sometimes into thoughts of blaſphemie againſt God and Chriſt, and the Scriptures; men wretchedly imagi-

Diverſities of thoughts in men.

Psal. 94. 19.

Esa. 53. 3.

2 Pet 3. 4. 1 Cor. 1. 21.

ning and thinking negatively & unworthily of either, O how meanely conceited are many men of Christ, making him the Carpenters Sonne, a man of sorrowes and no way to bee regarded for salvation, and as for the Scriptures, their authority and verity is questioned, and men deeme it to be but the word of man, vaine and fooliſh, and as for God hee is directly or virtually ſhut out in his being and Attributes, men thinke him not to be at all, or not to be ſo juſt, preſent, powerfull, gratious, and mercifull as he hath revealed himſelfe to bee; witneſſe theſe Scriptures, *Pſal.* 14. 1. *Iob* 22. 13, 14. *Epheſ.* 2. 12. Somtimes into thoughts of infidelity, againſt the power, and promiſe, and providence of God, and theſe ariſe principally in times

times of mens diſtreſſes; now men take thought what they ſhall eate, and for to morrow how they and theirs ſhall doe; the Prince thought in himſelfe that the preſent ſcarcitie was ſuch, that ſhould God open windowes in Heaven, it could not cauſe ſuch a plenty as the Propher ſpake of. Sometimes into thoughts of pride, men have ſelfe-juſtifying thoughts, and ſelfe-advancing thoughts, diſtentorious, and curious thoughts, many times they climbe up unto the exploration of ſecrets beyond reaſon to the ruine of their parts and eſtates. Sometimes into thoughts of folly; mens thoughts are empty and incoherent; they carry the ſcumme and foaming of the water in them, men many times doe not

Mat 6. 25,27,28, 31.

2 King. 7. 2.

Luk 18. 11.

Luk. 15. 7.

Rom. 12. 3.

know what to make of them, neither are they able to give a good account of them unto God or men; There are alſo unſetled thoughts which have no ſteadineſſe or fixedneſſe in them; they come and goe having a fluencie in them, as bubbles riſe up and ſink againe; ſo doe the thoughts of many riſe and fall; men doe thinke and unthinke againe, even as men by the quick ſuggeſtion of their phantaſie doe looſe one dreame by another, ſo doe men by the ſlipperineſſe of their thoughts looſe one thought in another; nay of ſuch a roaving diſpoſition are our thoughts, that they are much like to the wanton Spannell, that will run after every bird even to the looſing of his Maſter; truly there is no ſtaying of thoughts, but they

Simile.

they will be gone, and many times they take their flight beyond the call and command of Chriſtians themſelves. There are ſtrange & horrible thoughts that many times doe come into mens minds; as for a man to abhorre God, renounce Chriſt, Heaven and all, for a man to murder himſelfe, for a parent to murder his child, *&c.* There are diſtracting and withdrawing thoughts; ſuch as creepe into us when wee are about the performance of duties, aliena-ting us from the more ſpirituall performance of them; as *Benjamin* found *Ioſephs* cup in his ſack, and he knew not how it came there, ſo Gods children doe finde ſuch dartings and droppings in of ſtrange thoughts when they are upon duties, that they wonder

whence they ſhould ariſe. Alſo there are unſeaſonable thoughts; thoughts that are good materially may become circumſtantially evill; it is Satans policy to prevent and interrupt a convenient and preſent good, by thruſting in ſome unſeaſonable good, a good that is not well placed and tim'd; for a man to have praying thoughts is good, but when hee ſhould have hearing thoughts to have theſe praying thoughts is unſeaſonable, *&c.* To conclude, there are deſpairing thoughts, men conceiving themſelves to bee reprobated and rejected of God, to whom the poſſibility of pardoning mercy and heavenly happineſſe doth no way appertaine: *I ſaid in my haſt I am cut off from before thine eyes*, ſaith *David*;

Pſal. 31. 22.

David; there was his periſhing thoughts.

4. That ſinnefullneſſe of thoughts are a juſt cauſe of ſoule-trouble unto Gods Saints, you ſhall heare them bitterly thus complaining, ſeldome doe thoughts of God or goodneſſe riſe up within mee, my ſoule is ſo dry and barren, that I ſeldome thinke of any good, but then when I am to doe it; yea and oftentimes when I am doing good I thinke not of it, I have occaſions enough before mee for good thoughts, but my nature is dull and will not, or inexpert and cannot make uſe of them; and if my thoughts begin at any time to worke upon good objects, if I take God, or Chriſt, or the Word, or my ſin into my thoughts, I ſoone looſe the ſent, and am farre from in-

Simile. ſiſting on them; the Bee may ſometimes light upon a good flower, but inſtantly it paſſeth away and pitcheth it ſelfe upon ſome filthy weede; and I alas, it is long before my ſoule can bee brought to pitch on a good object; and I finde it a thing moſt difficult to make my minde to fixe and to keepe up thoughts of goodneſſe in mee; But as for evill thoughts they ſwarme within my minde and ſettle too faſt, you cannot name that wicked thought of which I am not guilty, my thoughts have beene blaſphemous againſt Chriſt, and God, and the Word of God, my thoughts have beene doubting and diſtruſting the power, goodneſſe, and providence of God, my thoughts have beene proud, fooliſh, and wandring; and

and now I doe deſpaire in my thoughts of mine eſtate. God beholds mee in my thoughts, and it is ſinfull corruption that ſends up theſe thoughts, and Satan cannot but enter by theſe thoughts, and I can doe nothing as I ſhould doe it for theſe thoughts; my croſſe and calamity is greatned by theſe thoughts, alas what will become of mee for theſe my thoughts?

This is the thing which hath made a deepe wound in the ſpirit; for the curing and comforting whereof, I ſhall lay downe certaine propoſitions and preſcriptions.

Seven ſettlemẽts about thoughts.

1. That the deareſt children of God beſides their naturall thoughts, may have many ſinfull and evill thoughts glancing and riſing up within their

Iob 15.

3 Cauſes of evill thoughts in Gods children.

mindes; yea they may have the ſame vile thoughts which a very wicked man hath; and wonder not at it; ſeeeing 1. Satan is as watchfull and malicious againſt them as any other, and hee doth more fiercely aſſault them then any other, and is more willing to vexe them then any other. 2. Corruption cleaves to the ſoules of them as well as others, and it workes in them as well as in any other; where the ſpring of corruption is not wholy dried up, it is and will be more or leſſe bubbling out into moſt vile and noiſome thoughts. 3. Infirmity is many times as much in them as it is in others; they are not alwaies ſo watchfull, and fearefull as it doth become them; if the windowes ſtand open no wonder if birds flie into the

chambe-

chamber, and if Chriſtians let downe their watch, and care, no wonder that vaine thoughts doe enter, lodging themſelves by armies within them, ſporting themſelves in their mindes, and preſuming to juſtle in with them to the Church, and to the Cloſet, mightily diſtempering and diſtracting them in duty, nay making them to become like other men.

2. That it is a mercy to come unto the ſound acquaintance of the evillneſſe of a mans owne thoughts; Hypocriſie and ſinfull vanity conceive that thoughts are free, and therefore is it feareleſſe and careleſſe about them, making nothing of them; you ſhall hardly perſwade a wicked man to thinke that his thoughts are evill and ought to be bewailed, or amended;

ded; whereas a man that is godly indeed, he is made ſenſible of the ſinnefullneſſe of his thoughts by way of feare and trouble, theſe amaze his minde, afflict his ſpirit, and doe ſo greatly burthen him, that he crieth out of them; and by this diſcovery made unto him, he is ſet into the way of riſing from them, and forſaking of them according to Gods requirement; *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts*; and truth it is, that though the godly doe not finde evill thoughts remooved by abſolute ceſſation, ſo as they ſhall never ſtirre more at all; yet they are remooved by ſubjection and manner of operation, although they doe ſtart up, yet the Elect upon the apprehenſion of their evillneſſe, ſubject

Eſa. 55. 7.

A twofold remoovall of evill thoughts, 1 By ceſſation

2 Subjection.

ſubject not themſelves unto them; they are not ſo effectually active or actuating as formerly, or as they are to wicked men; this is a truth; that evills apprehended are ſooneſt arraigned, condemned, bewailed, prevented, and overcome.

3. That among many ill thoughts lurking and lodging within us, it muſt be our wiſedome to take notice of the good thoughts that are within us alſo; it is moſt true, that Chriſtians are mixt creatures, fleſh and Spirit, nature and grace; and ſo there may bee found within them many ſpirituall and excellent thoughts, as well as evill and bad thoughts; I would have men to know

Signes of goodneſſe of thoughts

1. That every thought of evill is not an evill thought, but the goodneſſe of mans thoughts ſtand

ſtand in thinking upon the evill and ungodlineſſe of his nature and practiſe, and the diſhonour of God by the ſame unto repentance it ſelfe.

2. That when the heart can lay out for holy duties, and project a courſe of ſanctification, and a way of ſalvation, prudently declining the occaſions ſtirring up to ſinfull thoughts; then there are good thoughts within; all providing thoughts for duty are very good thoughts; the wicked man is thinking how he may ſhift off all good and doe all evill, and a godly man hath contrary thoughts unto all ſinne, and caring thoughts for all duty.

3. That many times the number of evill thoughts may bee more to a Chriſtians ſenſe then the number of his good thoughts;

thoughts; a Chriſtian may ſee and diſcerne in himſelfe a great deale of corruption working againſt a little grace.

4. That one good thought ſpringing up within the ſoule amongſt many bad thoughts, may be a ground of comfort againſt all evill thoughts whatſoever; it being an argument of grace in truth to ſend out good thoughts.

A. That though the ſame evill thoughts may be both in the good and bad, yet it is with a great difference, For

1. It is not all evill thoughts in good men; they have ſome good thoughts in them.

Future differences betweene the thoughts of good and bad men.

Ob. So have wicked men too?

Sol. Have they good thoughts within them? whence come they? I am

am ſure corrupt nature cannot ſend out one good thought, and unregenerate men are truly empty of ſpirituall thoughts; but make the beſt of them and their thoughts, I am ſure they are in them againſt a temper to evill thoughts, and againſt their will and affections; light is not more diſpleaſing to ſoare eyes, then good thoughts are diſtaſtfull unto wicked men; good thoughts are ſtrangers with them, they goe away as ſoone as they come, all their thoughts of goodnes are tranſient and meerely apprehenſive, no way practicall & permanent, let

let them bee never ſo good materially, they are no way good ſubjectively and circumſtantially.

2. Under all bad thoughts within, a good man is wearie and burdened, and willing of good and better thoughts for them, he cannot fall in with ill thoughts by way of approbation, but in his judgement hee doth condemne the univerſality of evill thoughts, which are thruſt upon his minde unavoidably; whereas wicked men are unwilling of good thoughts, making them their burden, and are hugging of ſinnefull thoughts, making them their delight; affectuous thoughts doe not more belong to the pleaſure of the body, then ſinfull thoughts do to the delight of the wicked.

3. Ill-

3. Ill thoughts in the godly are in reſiſtance, as they come not in with welcome, ſo they ſtay not there in quiet and entertainement; they doe bewaile them, and pray againſt them, labouring the remoovall of them by all meanes.

4. Ill thoughts in the godly doe ſpring from corruption impaired and diſabled by the preſence and power of ſanctifying grace which can hold no peace with corruption; ill thoughts in wicked men doe flow from corruption in ſtrength and unſubdued, and therefore they make no oppoſition againſt them any farther then they oppoſe themſelves to themſelves, and their owne ends; it is one thing to bee troubled with the evill of thoughts, and another thing to

be

bee troubled with the clogging circumſtances of thoughts, an evill man may reſiſt an evill thought, for the declining of ſome ſenſible evill, or for the furthering of ſome other evill, all a wicked mans thoughts doe bowe and bend to ſinfull projects, whereas good men under the trouble and vexation of evill thoughts receive much good at the laſt; God hereby making them more fearefull of ſinne, and watchfull over their thoughts.

5. That multitude of riſing and injected thoughts not affected, but vexing and perplexing the ſoule, cannot take away the ground of a Chriſtians comfort and confidence; there is no thought of heart bee it never ſo vile but it may be repented of, and divine grace can pardon it; and

Mark 3. 28
Acts 8. 22.

and they are not of force to alter a mans eſtate in grace or glory; conſider what I ſay; that if Satan ſhould ſtudie all the arts of hell to coine the moſt abhominably abhominable thoughts of Atheiſme, blaſphemy, murder, &c. and afterward dart them with all the violence of hell into the minde of men, (men in the meane time abhorring and rejecting them) they ſhall proove but mens croſſes, they ſhall not be reputed as their ſinnes, and ſo ſhall no way impaire their happineſſe ſtanding twixt them and Heaven; and as they cannot alter an eſtate in happineſſe, no more can they diminiſh a condition in holineſſe; *Benjamin* was never the more diſhoneſt, becauſe *Ioſephs* cup was in his ſack, or *Ioſeph* the more uncleane

Note.

cleane becauſe his miſtreſſe did attempt his chaſtity, no more doe the evill of injected thoughts alter the gratious temper of a Chriſtian; doth the beating of the waves againſt a rock alter the temper of the rock? no more doth the injecting of evill thoughts by Satan change a Chriſtians holy condition. *Simile.*

6. That where thoughts are ſenſibly evill and naught, it is more wiſedome to ſeeke their cure and ſtrengthning againſt them then to ſtand too long complaining of them, and of trouble or danger by them; and here know, 1. That it is no eaſie or ordinary worke to alter, order, and keepe under a mans thoughts, they are very wilde and unruly and wily. 2. That it is not naturall meanes or agents which can cure the Chri-

Christian of the evillneſſe of his thoughts, that which turnes nature muſt bee another thing then nature, all naturall cauſes worke onely in a naturall way and to that onely which is naturall, a ſpirituall agent and a ſpirituall way is required to free men from ill thoughts; I cannot fall into all particulars, let theſe that I ſhall name ſuffice for the generall.

Six helpes against evill thoughts.

1. Repent for the whole evill of your thoughts; let them breake and bleede your ſoules, and then you are in the way to be delivered from them; *Waſh thine heart O Ieruſalem from wickedneſſe that thou maiſt bee ſaved, how long ſhall vaine thoughts lodge within thee?* how doe men come to remoove, and diſlodge vaine thoughts? it is by repentance for ſinne and un-

Acts 8 22.

Ier. 4. 14

ungodlineſſe, this is the forſaking of a mans thoughts ſpoken of by the Prophet *Iſaiah*; *If thou haſt done fooliſhly in lifting up thy ſelfe, or if thou haſt thought evill, lay thine hand upon thy mouth*, ſaith *Salomon*, *Prov.* 30. 32. Eſa. 55. 7.

2. Give ſcope and rale unto Gods Word which is every way healing and ordering unto the evillneſſe of mens thoughts, the Word is a notable meanes to preſerve, yea and to deliver from evill thoughts; it begets a new ſpring, I meane a new minde, and that will ſend out new and ſuppreſſe the old thoughts; the Word of God is

The uſe of the Word about the thoughts is fivefold.

1. A ſearcher and diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of mans heart, it traceth and hunts out the ſecret windings and

min-

mindings of the ſame, *Heb.*4. 12.

2. A condemner and reproover of ſinfull thoughts; it doth indite all evill thoughts, ſharpely checking men for contemplative wickedneſſe, *Mat.* 5. 28.

3. A remoover of ſinnefull thoughts; it frees the ſoule from evill cogitations, *Pſal.* 119.11. the voice of the Word ſounding in the ſoule unto evill thoughts, is like the wiſe clamour by which the ravenous birds are ſcared from their unjuſt prey.

4. A ſubduer of evill thoughts; let the Word worke never ſo powerfully, yet ſtrange thoughts will remaine ſtill in the ſoule; but the Word is of that force that it caſts downe imaginations, and brings into captivity

captivity every thought, 2 *Cor.* 10.4,5.

5. A preſerver againſt evill thoughts; the Word of God can keepe out evill thoughts, and maintaine good thoughts in the minde; it will ſtore and enrich the mind with divine principles and habits; ſo that the minde ſhall not be naked and emptie; but full with the variety of heavenly notions; the Word is full, and the minde ſhall finde heere a promiſe, and there a precept, there a threatning, and heere a reward, *&c.* the Word is mighty in operation, and it will draw out with ſweeteſt power thoſe heavenly principles, and with them thoſe gratious habits in the minde unto ſome acts and operations; like as the Sun in heate is virtuall to the flowers, ſo is the Word in power to the *Simile.*

ſtirring up of habituall grace and implanted principles, the mind by it is ſet on working and muſing on that which is good. In a word, the Word of God doth preſent the minde with freſh objects of meditation, whereby it mooves the ſoule from one meditation to another, & from one good thought to a better.

3. Wiſely keepe off from all ſuch occaſions and things which might ſtirre up and continue in you evill thoughts; there are many things which will foment matter of evill to the minde, which hath not onely active but receptive diſpoſitions, it doth not onely worke from an inward but an outward cauſe; occaſions have beene very impreſſive upon the minde, we may ſee it in *David* and *Peter*, &c. There

There are ſeven things (ſtirring up evill thoughts in men) to be taken heed of.

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1. The not making conſcience of evill thoughts; it was wont to be ſaid that [a] whatſoever is unlawfull to bee done or ſpoken, is as unlawfull to bee thought; and I am ſure this is as true, that ſuch as make no conſcience of thoughts, will make no conſcience of what they doe or ſpeake; this fancied liberty of thoughts hath opened the flood-gate and occaſioned the letting in of multitude of vaine thoughts into men.

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Pro. 16. 3.

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FINIS.

A Poſt-Script to the Reader.

THou haſt a promiſe of Caſes in the Epiſtle unto thee, I had no ſooner made it, but it was called for by deſiring and needing Chriſtians, time and leaſure alſo ſerving, it is brought forth, as fitly agreeing with the ſubject handled, and deemed (by men more judicious then my ſelfe) very comforting and ſetling unto perplexed ſoules.

I.S.

Errata.

Page 116. for are the next inſtruments, reade or. Page 323. for formerly, reade formally.